

AN IMPOSSIBLE AGREEMENT: THE ROLE OF THE WARS IN THE INDEPENDENCE AND IN DEFINING THE STATE IN THE EMPIRE OF BRAZIL (1822-1825)

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ABSTRACT

Contrary to what is often argued, including in historiography, the independence and territorial maintenance of the Empire of Brazil cannot be explained by “an agreement between elites.” Firstly, this article intends to demonstrate that this is impossible due to these interests being heterogeneous, both from province to province, each with varied ways of reproducing social life, and in the countryside of each province. Evidence of this is the Crown’s efforts to shape an expressive military force, recruiting many foreign mercenaries, some of them internationally renowned like Cochrane. Furthermore, the independence wars could not be summarized as being in the orbit of Rio de Janeiro or Lisbon; on the contrary, often the central question was the definition of the type of State that was being built: either a more liberal State with more rights, or a more conservative one. Especially, the possibility of viewing independence as a revolution is what magnetizes marginalized groups and delays conflicts to long after the crowning of D. Pedro I.

KEYWORDS

Brazilian Independence – Wars of Independence – Political Projects.

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UM ACORDO IMPOSSÍVEL: O PAPEL DAS GUERRAS NA INDEPENDÊNCIA E NA DEFINIÇÃO DO ESTADO NO IMPÉRIO DO BRASIL (1822-1825)

RESUMO

Ao contrário do que frequentemente se propaga, inclusive na historiografia, a independência e a manutenção territorial do Império do Brasil não tem como se explicar através de um “acordo entre as elites”. De um lado, o artigo pretende mostrar que isso não era possível porque estes interesses eram heterogêneos, tanto de província para província, cada qual com variadas formas de reprodução da vida social, assim como no interior de cada uma. A evidência disso é que a Corte teve especial preocupação em formar uma expressiva força militar, recrutando vários mercenários estrangeiros, alguns deles de renome internacional como Cochrane. Para além disso, as guerras de independência não se resumiam a estar sob a órbita do Rio de Janeiro ou Lisboa; ao contrário, muitas vezes a grande questão é a definição do tipo de Estado que está sendo construído: mais liberal e com mais direitos, ou mais conservador. É especialmente a possibilidade de vislumbrar a independência como uma revolução que magnetiza os grupos marginalizados e prorroga os conflitos para muito tempo depois da coroação de D. Pedro I.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES

Independência do Brasil – Guerras de Independência – Projetos Políticos.

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1. *The other independences*

Pedro da Silva Pedroso is perhaps the synthesis of everything we want to show here. In his time, Pedroso was a protagonist of events of the period ranging from the Republican Revolution of Pernambuco, in 1817, through the Independence and the Confederation of Ecuador. However, being black and having fought in Pernambuco and not in the Court, he already felt in life that his story was being erased, giving way to a narrative of Independence closer to what we know today. The contrast between the man who in action seemed to accelerate History with his own hands and the idea he was going to be forgotten did not seem to satisfy Pedroso, about whom scholars emphasize he was not only a protagonist, but that he liked to be seen as such.

In summary, Pedro da Silva Pedroso was an artillery captain who distinguished himself as a military leader in the Republican Revolution of Pernambuco in 1817, and identified himself as a “brown man”. Luiz Geraldo Silva, who made a beautiful profile of Pedro Pedroso, showed that the increase in his power was directly related to the leadership he had over black men, many of them in the army, others in the militias.³ In addition to the broad participation of black men in these official armed institutions, Marcus Carvalho recalls that, from 1817, Pernambuco witnessed a recurring practice of the masters arming the enslaved under their rule to take part in the disputes⁴. All this contingent greatly increased Pedroso’s power, in a context of broad racial clash in the captaincy, to the point that Denis Bernardes stated that in 1817, in Pernambuco, Haiti was here⁵. With the victory of the Constitutionalist Revolution of Porto, Pedroso and the other revolutionaries of 1817 who were imprisoned in Bahia returned to

3 SILVA, Luiz Geraldo. Negros patriotas. Raça e identidade social na formação do Estado Nação (Pernambuco, 1770-1830). In: JANCSÓ, István (org.) *Brasil: Formação do Estado e da Nação*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2003, p. 497-520.

4 CARVALHO, Marcus de. O outro lado da Independência: Quilombolas, negros e pardos em Pernambuco (Brazil), 1817-1823. *Luso-Brazilian Review*, vol. 43, n. 1, p. 1-30, 2006.

5 BERNARDES, Denis Antonio de Mendonça. Pernambuco e o Império (1822-24): sem constituição soberana não há união. In: JANCSÓ, István (org.) *Brasil: formação do Estado e da nação*. São Paulo: Hucitec/, 2003, p. 219-249.

the city of Recife. And there Pedroso again proved that he was a military phenomenon, ousting the Juntas de Governo in series, including the liberals, and playing a key role in the defeat of the Confederation of Ecuador. At this point, he was on the opposite side of other black military leaders, such as Emiliano Mundurucu, one of the heroes of the Confederation of Ecuador and leader of the troops of brown men who not only printed papers extolling Haiti, but also was on Haitian territory for a while after the defeat of the Confederation, even though he settled even in Boston, in the United States, where he became a prominent abolitionist⁶. What seems to have been a contradiction in Pedroso's positions, due to the fact that he did not support a more radical political project, Marcus Carvalho explains from Pedroso's seduction by promises from Rio de Janeiro to the national military and by an undisguised ambition to become Governor of Arms through a Board of Government that he thought owed him his own ascension⁷.

The fact is that Pedroso has always been an unwanted hero. At the time when the leaders of the revolution of 1817 were released, he was the only one not granted amnesty and would go on to perpetual exile if not for the intervention of the Pernambuco deputies in the Courts of Lisbon. After his service in repressing the Confederation of Ecuador, Pedroso went to live eclipsed in court, but never forgot that he was a protagonist. Proof of this is the incredible finding, once again by Luiz Geraldo Silva, of a text that Pedroso had published in 1834 in the newspaper *A Bussola da Liberdade*:

I couldn't hear in cold blood that Mr. Dr. José Bonifácio was the first to give the cry of independence of Brazil: this glory belongs only to me, because I was the first in the city of Recife de Pernambuco, on March 6, 1817 at 2:00 p.m., I made this magic word sound, which was then echoed on September 7, 1822 by Mr. José Bonifácio de Andrada in the Ipiranga Fields.

6 MOREL, Marco. *A Revolução do Haiti e o Brasil Escravista*: O que não deve ser dito. Jundiá: Paco, 2017.

7 CARVALHO, Marcus de. O outro lado da Independência: Quilombolas, negros e pardos em Pernambuco (Brazil), 1817-1823. *Luso-Brazilian Review*, vol. 43, n. 1, p. 1-30, 2006.

Forgive me! To each its own.⁸

It was not only Pedroso, a man of that time, who had a story of another independence to tell, different in the traditional narrative we know, in the objectives and even in its chronological milestones. Another example was recorded several times in the interior of Pará, between 1823 and 1824. In this province, it was only in August 1823, almost a year after the famous September 7, that the Pará government officially submitted to the authority of D. Pedro I and the Empire of Brazil, for which the English officer Grenfell, a mercenary hired to act in the wars of independence on the side of the Court of Rio de Janeiro, played a fundamental role. However, contrary to what many supposed, the official alignment of Pará to Rio de Janeiro did not bring peace to the province. Instead, it is precisely after this milestone that the war of independence intensifies with a civil war that spread to almost all the important economic centers of the province, from the region of Cameté to Santarém, between 1823 and 1824. With bold actions, the rebels blocked rivers and even rehearsed a blockade of Belém, leaving the government of the Province completely tied hands and relegating to the authorities of the countryside the mission of self-defense. One of the issues that draws the most attention in this civil war is the marked presence of indigenous people in the revolt, especially those already debased, many of them members of the army itself and the militias, which made this situation generate a curious fact: the authorities were afraid to move the armed forces, because they were often the factor of instability, generating more deserters and more rebels.

The great presence of indigenous people in the revolts, added to the registered participation of blacks and even enslaved, generated a narrative that this was a racial war, with the objective of exterminating all whites. The racial component, added to the inability of the government of Belém to produce any reaction, generated several letters to the Court in Rio de Janeiro asking for reinforcements to face the rebels, claiming that

8 A Bussola da Liberdade, 20 de setembro de 1834. Apud: SILVA, Luiz Geraldo. Negros patriotas. Raça e identidade social na formação do Estado Nação (Pernambuco, 1770-1830). In: JANCSÓ, István (org.) *Brasil: Formação do Estado e da Nação*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2003, p. 497-520.

Pará was one step away from being lost to the civilized world. However, a careful reading of the reports of the rebel movement also records that they commonly entered the villages cheering the Emperor and saying that they wanted to defend the “true cause of independence”. That is, for that large mass formed mainly by indigenous people, that independence established in Belém was not the real one, but rather a usurpation by those who wanted to maintain the old social order. For them, independence was clearly a much more exalted political project that would bring about substantive changes, especially the end of the compulsory work to which many were subjected there, especially the indigenous people⁹. In other words, for these rebels, even in 1823 or 1824, independence had not yet happened.

These two lines, or historical narratives described by men of this period – Pedro Pedroso and the rebels of Pará – are quite provocative, because they implode traditional landmarks on independence. First, the timeframe, since the undeniably egotistical Pedro Pedroso marked the beginning of Brazil’s independence in the Revolution of 1817, the same one that Varnhagen said that divine providence ensured that it did not prosper so as not to break Brazilian territorial unity¹⁰. On the other hand, the factitious people of Pará – mainly indigenous people – still called for true independence in the years 1823 and 1824, already far from the milestone in which some historians claim that Brazil’s independence happened in Bahia¹¹. The other thing that draws attention in these stories, of course, is the protagonism of black and indigenous men on the board of the wars

9 These events are described in more detail in MACHADO, André Roberto de Arruda. *A quebra da mola real das sociedades: a crise política do Antigo Regime Português na província do Grão-Pará (1821-25)*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2010, cap. 4-5.

10 PRADO, Maria Lígia Coelho. O Brasil e a Distante América do Sul. In: PRADO, Maria Lígia Coelho. *Revista de História*, n. 145, p. 131, 2001.

11 It is a very interesting phenomenon that the deviant history of independence in Bahia – in the sense of this province having aligned itself when a year after the episode in Ipiranga – generated for much of the twentieth century not an idea of plural independence, but that the independence of Brazil would have happened in Bahia. In this sense, for example, other events were ignored, such as the subsequent episodes in Pernambuco, Maranhão and Pará or even the social upheavals that continued to occur in Bahia itself. Cf. TAVARES, Luis Henrique Dias. *Independência do Brasil na Bahia*. Salvador: EDUFBA, 2005. DOI: 10.7476/9788523209018.

of independence, intervening in provincial politics and beyond these borders. All this makes us wonder: what was independence to these men? That is, what was really at stake and what were they willing to kill and die for?

Throughout the text, it is expected that it will be evident that for these men what was at stake was much more than a choice between staying connected to Lisbon or creating an independent state. There were many and clearly irreconcilable aspirations for social political changes of men such as Pedro Pedroso, the indigenous people of Pará or the black men of the Periquitos battalion who put Salvador on alert shortly after the famous July 2, 1823.

In this sense, the recurring and still very popular thesis that independence in Brazil was peaceful is actually a typical operation of any nationalist history that makes forgetfulness the tool that makes everything homogeneous, such as the so often repeated formula of what would be the fundamental ingredients of a nation: a people, a language, a territory; elements that in the real world were practically never available to form any national state¹². The fact is that one of the first lessons for any history student is the need to avoid a teleological or more generically stated posture, the retrodiction. That is, do not build a historical narrative from only the result of the process, ignoring the other political projects that were at stake, but were defeated¹³. Undoubtedly, the most difficult exercise in this direction always involves the history of the formation of National States. Several researchers point to the strengthening and dissemination of historical knowledge from the nineteenth century as something intrinsically linked to the need to justify the existence of national states. And, in this dimension, historiography itself enshrines the myths of origin of the new states. In the Brazilian case, as already pointed out by Manoel Salgado

12 HOBBSAWM, Eric. *Nação e Nacionalismo desde 1780: programa, Mito e Realidade*. Tradução de Maria Célia Paoli e Anna Maria Quirino. 2. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1990, p. 19, 25. An interesting exploration of the origin myths of Latin American countries is in PIMENTA, João Paulo Garrido. *Estado e Nação no Fim dos Impérios Ibéricos no Prata (1808-1828)*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2002.

13 BARROS, José d'Assunção. Retrodição – Um problema para a construção do tempo histórico. *Ler História*, n. 65, p. 129-155, 2013.

Guimarães, the historiography produced at the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute (IHGB) is born not only umbilically linked to the Imperial State, but is clearly teleological and its mission is to produce a National History that justifies the existence of the National State as it happened¹⁴.

Thus, if the history of a country like the United States will highlight the search for personal freedom as the engine of the country's formation, an objective for which everything is justified, including the rebellion, in Brazil, how to write the history of a country that maintains the reigning house and much of the colonial territory? The idea of independence is consolidated as a simple passage, an evolution. The history of peaceful independence was the very foundation of how the Empire saw itself: a strong and unitary monarchy in contrast to a constantly boiling Republican America and its territories dismembered by the ambition of the warlords¹⁵. A story made by palatial agreements, under the leadership of the Emperor himself, is nothing more than an extension of the interpretation of the world as seen by the Saquaremas¹⁶.

Stories such as that of Pedro Pedroso, the Confederation of Ecuador, the movement of indigenous people in the south of Portuguese America – the latter connected with the events of the Spanish world – all this is increasingly making it clear that there is a great diversity of nuclei of interest throughout this territory, whether from province to province – many of them quite different in their productive foundations – or even within it. What interest would be so widespread as to weld a great deal? Undoubtedly, slavery is a great convergence, but it could coexist with diverse national projects. In turn, the thesis that defends that the territorial unity of Brazil was achieved because the Casa de Bragança would be the only

14 GUIMARÃES, Manoel Luís Salgado. Nação e Civilização nos Trópicos: o Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro e o Projeto de uma História Nacional. *Revista Estudos Históricas*, Rio de Janeiro, n. 1, p. 5-27, 1988.

15 PRADO, Maria Lígia Coelho. O Brasil e a Distante América do Sul. *Revista de História*, n. 145, 2001.

16 MATTOS, Ilmar Rohloff de. *O Tempo Saquarema: a formação do Estado Imperial*. 5. edição, São Paulo: Hucitec, 2004.

diplomatic *player* capable of maintaining the slave trade in the face of the power of England is an intelligent idea, but it does not support itself in the face of reality. After all, as is well known, D. Pedro I quickly gave England an agreement to end the slave trade in a few years, in exchange for the recognition of the Empire. This agreement, moreover, was the cause of the first major crisis between the Emperor and Congress, the latter much less willing to give in to the end of trafficking. In this sense, it is worth remembering that the slave trade returns as a phoenix, precisely when the political elite gets rid of D. Pedro I, initiating the Regency¹⁷.

Having made the above counterpoints, this article is interested in discussing the role and weight of armed conflicts – or wars, in other words – in the independence of Brazil. After all, why did these conflicts exist? Were they instrumental in deciding the alignment of the provinces to Rio de Janeiro or Lisbon or did they have weight in other issues in the same period? In a way, this text allows me to revisit the fundamental questions of my doctoral thesis, defended in 2006, but when my concern was centered on Grão-Pará, although I have already realized there that the Histories of Independence are never limited to a province, especially in a territory like that of Portuguese colonization in America historically formed by several nuclei on which villages, cities and captaincies orbited in “pilgrimage routes” that hierarchized the territory¹⁸. In any case, from this initial perspective and a series of reflections made since then, we seek here to establish some connections, similarities and differences in key provinces, especially Bahia, Pernambuco, Maranhão, Goiás, São Pedro and, of course, Pará. As is evident in this introduction, there is also the intention to highlight the actions of marginalized groups, particularly indigenous and Afro-Brazilians. In short, we seek to establish here a more general explanatory framework for the Independence of Brazil, with armed conflicts as its engine.

17 MACHADO, André Roberto de Arruda. O trabalho indígena no Brasil durante a primeira metade do século XIX: um labirinto para os historiadores. In: RÉ, Henrique Antonio; SAES, Laurent Azevedo Marques de; VELLOSO, Gustavo. (org.). *História e Historiografia do Trabalho Escravo no Brasil: novas perspectivas*. 1. ed. São Paulo: Publicações BBM/Alameda, 2020.

18 MACHADO, André Roberto de Arruda. *A quebra da mola real das sociedades: a crise política do Antigo Regime Português na província do Grão-Pará (1821-25)*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2010.

By extension, it is hoped to bury the idea that the Empire of Brazil and the territorial unit were forged by a great “agreement between elites”, in a palatial and peaceful transition. As highlighted since the title, this was “an impossible agreement” since it involved actors with irreconcilable interests.

2. *The meaning of wars in the Independence of Brazil*

For a historian it is highly recommended not to disregard a popular view of the period, even if it is wrong. Behind a mistaken conclusion of men and women of the time, questions or concerns may often be lodged that are not recommended to ignore. Perhaps the best example of this is in the classic *O Tempo Saquarema*, in which Ilmar Mattos opens one of his most important chapters with the popular joke that there was nothing more like a *Saquarema* than a *Luzia* in power.¹⁹ Mattos writes dozens of pages to fully show that there were, yes, many differences between the *Luzias* and the *Saquaremas*. However, the popular joke was not based on anything: the absolute control of the state leadership by the *Saquaremas* and the inability of the *Luzias* to put into practice in the government their way of seeing the world, ended up putting water in the mill of those who did not see differences between the two political groups²⁰.

When transferred to our specific problem, this exercise is quite useful. After all, we punctuate above characters and episodes that make clear the existence of wars during the period of independence of Brazil. If this is so evident to us, what is the reason for the prestige of the narrative of peaceful independence? Was it simply a historical erasure operation, without any contact with reality? I believe that an issue that helped to thrive on the idea that independence in Brazil was peaceful is due to the fact that although there were wars during this event, the scale of these conflicts has never been the same in other parts, such as Hispanic or English America. The perhaps most emblematic of these wars – the one that occurred in

19 *Saquaremas* was the best-know term for conservative politicians in the Empire of Brazil. *Luzia*, on the other hand, was a common term for liberal politicians.

20 MATTOS, Ilmar Rohloff de. *O Tempo Saquarema: a formação do Estado Imperial*. 5. edição, São Paulo: Hucitec, 2004.

Bahia – in the words of Sérgio Guerra Filho was almost an immobilized conflict, in which more men died from hunger and disease than from fighting²¹.

Perhaps the lower mortality or duration of these conflicts have enshrined the idea of lesser importance of wars in the independence of Brazil when compared to other parties. However, perhaps the mistake lies in comparing different wars, with different goals. Here, we intend to understand the real meaning of these wars in independence.

On the other hand, it seems clear that a political group never had any doubt that the war would be decisive in independence: the Court of Rio de Janeiro. As is well known, since June 1822 José Bonifácio had already issued orders to get European soldiers to thicken Brazilian troops. The number of Europeans recruited is not very impressive: José Honório Rodrigues estimated that 450 Englishmen – the largest number of soldiers from a foreign country – were made mercenaries in the service of Rio de Janeiro²². It is true that some recruits drew attention, especially the legendary Lord Cochrane, an English officer who had already told exploits since the campaign against Napoleon and had just been decisive in Chile's independence²³.

The seemingly small number of foreign mercenaries – added to others already in America who joined this force – hides the real power of intervention of this group in the various conflicts opened in the provinces. The reasons for this seem to be diverse, such as the superiority of military training of the forces coming from Rio de Janeiro, the superior quality of weapons and other military artifacts, such as warships, in addition to the fame of some of the officers in the service of the Court, especially Cochrane.

21 GUERRA FILHO, Sérgio Armando Diniz. *O Povo e a Guerra: participação das camadas populares nas lutas pela independência no Brasil e na Bahia*. Dissertação (Mestrado em História Social) – Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, 2014.

22 RODRIGUES, José Honório. *Independência: Revolução e contra-revolução*, vol. 3 – As Forças Armadas. Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Francisco Alves Editora S.A., 1975.

23 VALE, Brian. *Independence or Death! British Sailors and Brazilian Independence, 1822-1825*. London, Tauris Academic Studies, 1996.

But certainly no factor was more decisive than the fact that these external armed groups encountered provinces with their extremely divided political and military forces as to what the political path should be. These political divisions, most of the time, made the provincial armed forces also actors in the disputes, making it difficult to build a hegemonic position of a group or even the organization of troops that made great resistance to the external armed forces. It is in this scenario that the external armed groups become decisive, unbalancing the political game in the provinces in favor of those who chose to orbit around the State project taken over by Rio de Janeiro. This is a clear picture in Pará, but it is clearly repeated in several of the other provinces that we will mention here. More than that, it seems clear that the Court of Rio de Janeiro saw this board clearly and foreign mercenaries were a necessary solution in the absence of human resources, but also a way to prevent these armed groups from being linked to provincial disputes. An example recognized by historiography is the role of the French mercenary Labatut who circulated through some provinces regimenting soldiers and became famous for his action in the conflicts of Independence in Bahia. Bonifácio believed that his position as a foreigner, completely indifferent to the disputes of the Bahian elites, was decisive to unbalance the game in favor of D. Pedro I²⁴. Another story told by Evaldo Cabral de Mello shows how the Court was totally clear about the importance of the mercenaries sent to the provinces to have a position of complete fidelity to D. Pedro I, without the possibility of connecting to the local groups: Mello says that the Court postponed the sending of Lord Cochrane to attack Recife in early 1824, when it already refused to give office to the president appointed by Rio de Janeiro. The reason is that Cochrane had not yet received what he thought was due to him by the independence campaigns and the ministers were afraid that, once in

24 GUERRA FILHO, Sérgio Armando Diniz. *O Povo e a Guerra*: participação das camadas populares nas lutas pela independência no Brasil e na Bahia. Dissertação (Mestrado em História Social) – Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, 2014.

Recife, he would ally himself with the rebels, since his thirst for money was as legendary as his military exploits²⁵.

In fact, Pernambuco is a great example of how the presence of these external armed forces was decisive for the internal political game of the provinces, including consequences beyond these borders. For Denis Bernardes, Pernambuco society in general, and its elites in particular, cracked irreconcilably from 1817. For Bernardes, the Pernambuco revolutionaries of 1817 established a radical political project not only for their republican appeal, but especially for their proposals for social changes, even reaching claims of greater racial equality. For Bernardes, all that followed – the Revolution of 1817, the Constitutional Juntas and the Confederation of Ecuador – was nothing more than a dispute between those who defended this radical political and social project and those who denied it²⁶. Obviously, there were those who moved between these projects, as we have already mentioned in the case of Pedro Pedroso. It is also interesting from the case of Pedroso to remember that there were divisions even between the groups that could be supposed to be more cohesive, such as black or enslaved men. Thus, the difference between Pedroso and Emilianio Mundurucu, both leaders and black military heroes, was mentioned, but with the first repressing the Confederation of Ecuador and the second being its important supporter. But even among the armed forces that later supported the Confederation of Ecuador and that were formed by black men, there were important differences in the understanding about what should be their conduct precisely from the moment the disobedience to Rio de Janeiro, before the outbreak of the Confederation itself, entered another level of repression when suffering the blockade of the port of Recife led by another English mercenary at the behest of Rio de Janeiro: John Taylor. Mundurucu's forces argued at a public meeting that the reaction should be to attack the trade of all whites, regardless of their place

25 MELLO, Evaldo Cabral de. *A outra Independência: o federalismo pernambucano de 1817 a 1824*. São Paulo: Editora 34, 2004, p. 179-180.

26 BERNARDES, Denis Antonio de Mendonça. Pernambuco e o Império (1822-24): sem constituição soberana não há união. In: JANCÓS, István (org.). *Brasil: formação do Estado e da nação*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2003, p. 219-249.

of birth. Another leader of the troops of black men – Agostinho Bezerra Cavalcanti – opposed the plan that was aborted after almost confronting the two groups²⁷.

The synthetic description above is only intended to demonstrate how the Pernambuco society was deeply divided. In this context, when looking at the sequence of facts, it is undeniable that the presence or absence of the external armed forces had a gigantic impact. Obviously they weren't absolute. An example of this is that despite the enormous pressure offered by the naval force commanded by Taylor for several months in the first half of 1824, including the blockade of Recife, the English mercenary failed to impose the orders of Rio de Janeiro and went through the shame of being refused the inauguration of two provincial presidents appointed by the Court. But at the same time, it is true that while Taylor was in Recife the more clear break with Rio de Janeiro was not realized. The Confederation of Ecuador itself will only take shape from July 1824, a few weeks after Taylor left Recife at the behest of the Court itself, which had ordered the entire naval force to gather to protect Rio de Janeiro because of information that a large squadron was being organized in Portugal to reconquer America²⁸. The capital character of these external forces was such that it will be at the center of the propaganda sent to the provinces by both sides of the dispute: on the one hand Taylor sends letters, on the eve of his departure to Rio de Janeiro, saying that Recife was on the verge of chaos and would surrender in less than two weeks, especially with the sending of a new force from the Court that would have a devastating victory against the rebels²⁹. A bluff, an artifice that the English mercenaries used and abused in the independence campaign. On the other hand, the leader of the

27 MOREL, Marco. *A Revolução do Haiti e o Brasil Escravista*: O que não deve ser dito. Jundiaí: Paco, 2017; MELLO, Evaldo Cabral de. *A outra Independência: o federalismo pernambucano de 1817 a 1824*. São Paulo: Editora 34, 2004, p. 201.

28 The news that Portugal was forming a great force to attack America had a great impact on the provinces. About this, Cf. MACHADO, André Roberto de Arruda. *A quebra da mola real das sociedades: a crise política do Antigo Regime Português na província do Grão-Pará (1821-25)*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2010.

29 Arquivo Público do Estado do Pará (APEP) – Caixa 30 – Série 13 – Ofícios dos Presidentes de Diversas Províncias (1819-29), d. sem número.

Confederates, Manuel de Carvalho Pais de Andrade, wrote a manifesto to the neighboring provinces to join this political project, highlighting, among other things, that the Court was petty enough to withdraw the naval force from the provinces for its defense, precisely at a time when an attack by Portuguese forces was feared³⁰. In addition to the symbolic effect of these troops, which certainly weighed heavily on the calculations of alliances or political disruptions, the fact is that it seems evident that the presence of Taylor's commanders held back for a time the advance of the Confederates.

Already in the second half of 1824, the Court finally obtained the necessary resources to send a large force to Recife, this time led by Cochrane, who defeated the Confederates. Once again, it should not be forgotten that the main enemies of the Confederates were in Pernambuco's own territory, and especially the initial refusal to give office to a president chosen by Rio de Janeiro – the first great symbol of confrontation with the Court that culminated in the Confederation – was a reissue of the dispute between the men of 1817 and their opponents. The external force, therefore, only unbalanced the disputes of Pernambuco against those who had more radical projects. In turn, the arrival of well-known names in that region, such as Cochrane and Grenfell, also aimed to frighten the entire region between Pernambuco and the Amazon, where mismatched information about alleged allies of the Confederates jumped out.

Taking advantage of this context, Lord Cochrane decided to stretch his mission to São Luís, in Maranhão, where he had already been a year earlier, being decisive in aligning this province with Rio de Janeiro. The following chapters of this story reinforce the argumentation of this article even more forcefully. To begin with, Lord Cochrane found a province as divided or even more divided as Pernambuco, between President Miguel Bruce's allies and his enemies, especially the concentrated Junta Expedicionária do Itapecuru-mirim. About Miguel Bruce there were suspicions, even in the Court, that he was an ally of the Confederates, but there are also records of emissaries of the republicans, coming from Ceará, to ne-

30 APEP – 789 – Correspondência de Diversos com o Governo (1824), d. 80.

gotiate with the men of Itapecuru-mirim. The truth is that the confusion was so great that the men of the Confederacy said they did not know who, after all, were their allies in Maranhão. In spite of this, one thing was certain: the province was totally cracked into a permanent military conflict and Cochrane knew very well how to use it to his advantage. As soon as he arrived, he received a petition from almost 80 Maranhão ladies accusing Bruce of all the evils of the province. In this climate of public insubordination against the president, but in a context in which his opponents did not have the strength to overthrow him, Lord Cochrane subjected the Maranhão leaders to continuous humiliation. First, he invested himself as Governor of Arms. He then ordered the president's allies and enemies to lay down their arms, and as the latter resisted, he did no less than depose Bruce. He chose a new president from province to hand, among other things to ensure that the Maranhão public coffers paid him the fortune of 104 contos de reis that he claimed as his right for his role in the independence campaign. The daring of Cochrane and the humiliation of the Maranhão leaders would still find the bottom of the well: at the beginning of 1825, Lord Cochrane refused to give possession to Pedro José da Costa Barros, appointed by the Court as the new president of Maranhão, perhaps worried that he was not so obedient to pay him the 104 contos de reis he demanded from the Maranhão coffers. As the nominee said he would hold the interim president responsible to the Crown, Cochrane's chosen one resigned, which made the Admiral angry enough to force Barros to go to Belém and wait there when he would allow his inauguration. Cochrane's actions, aiming to make his absolute power clear, had a direct impact not only in Maranhão, but in neighboring provinces, such as Pará, making it clear that at that time the Ecuadorian Confederation project or any other project that left the subordination axis to Rio de Janeiro, was unfeasible³¹.

31 MACHADO, André Roberto de Arruda. *A quebra da mola real das sociedades: a crise política do Antigo Regime Português na província do Grão-Pará (1821-25)*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2010; GALVES, Marcelo Cheche. Os republicanos do Maranhão: independência, confederação do Equador e a construção do Estado Imperial. In: GALVES, Marcelo Cheche; COSTA, Yuri (org.). *O Maranhão oitocentista*. São Luis: Editora UEMA, 2009.

It was not only the maritime forces sent from the Court that caused an imbalance of power groups within the provinces. In some cases, ground forces played the same role, including in divisions so strong that they threatened to divide the territories of the former captaincies. One of the most interesting cases is Goiás. The outbreak of the Courts of Lisbon triggered an open split between the elites of the south and north of the province, the latter more linked for reasons of trade to the region of Pará. The Northern Goiás began to defend their autonomy or, if this were not possible, their annexation to Pará. The connection of interests was so evident that the deputies for the Courts of Lisbon chosen in the District of Duas Barras – north of Goiás – were a resident of Pará (who never took office) and Joaquim Teotônio Segurado, a man who had public positions in favor of integration with Pará³².

The situation of Goiás exemplifies very well how the disputes in the period of independence were not watertight to the provincial borders, but had their logic in the hierarchization of the territories from trade relations, search for justice etc. To some extent, what Benedict Anderson called “pilgrimage routes”, but that men like Fernand Braudel and István Jancsó had already realized were several and not a single one in the former Portuguese colonial territory in America. Thus, the rebellion of Northerners in Goiás gave rise to several political claims, including the project to maintain a block of provinces united to Lisbon – which would include Pará, northern Goiás and Mato-Grosso, as well as Maranhão and its satellites – regardless of what would happen in the south of the continent. It is precisely with the sending of external military forces that the autonomist projects of the north of Goiás cool down. Not by chance, in this game of chess of independence, shortly after the defeat of the Northerners, the Goiás government arranged to send letters to Pará, in order to realize that the old projects of a block of provinces united to Lisbon had sunk³³.

32 BERBEL, Márcia Regina. *A Nação como Artefato: os deputados do Brasil nas Cortes Portuguesas de 1821-22*. São Paulo, Hucitec, 1999, pp. 79-80

33 MACHADO, André Roberto de Arruda. Para além das fronteiras do Grão-Pará: O peso das relações entre as províncias no xadrez da independência (1822-25). *Outros Tempos*, v. 12, p. 1-28, 2015. MOREIRA, Sérgio Paulo. A Independência em Goiás. *Revista de História*, n. 94, 1973. VIEIRA, Martha

Finally, perhaps the most emblematic case that helps to understand the weight of these external armed forces comes from Pará. As is well known, in 1823 Lord Cochrane left with a naval armed force from Rio de Janeiro and caused major changes on the way: not only did he definitively push the warships that were stationed in Bahia under Madeira's command, but he made a point of following them until he was sure that they would go to Lisbon and not to Pará or Maranhão, a possibility that was known to many in the two provinces. Arriving in Maranhão, Cochrane played a decisive role in aligning the province with Rio de Janeiro, bluffing that he had a much greater naval power than reality. After dealing with this issue, Cochrane entrusted Grenfell, an English officer at the time aged only 23, with the mission of doing the same in Pará. With such a challenge, Grenfell counted on a military apparatus that bordered on ridicule: how could he subject a province with only one war brig, 18 cannons and 90 men, of these 60 Englishmen? In his favor, only the same bluff as his master remained: with letters signed in Maranhão by Cochrane with the dates blank, he said that he was only the emissary of a powerful fleet commanded by the legendary English officer. A bluff about a squad that was just imaginary.

From this, there is an endless discussion in the historiography about the importance or not of the armed forces commanded by Grenfell for Pará to submit to Rio de Janeiro. On the one hand, there are those who insist that it was a simple imposition of the Court of D. Pedro I, without an expressive internal adherence. On the other hand, men like Palma Muniz, in a nationalist logic, argue that Grenfell's lie was discovered quickly and only had no greater consequences because the desire to integrate the Empire would be a majority³⁴. Unlike these two positions, it seems clear that Grenfell arrived at a Pará divided not only between those who defended to remain connected to Portugal or Rio de Janeiro, but also by political projects that could be less translated by this plebiscitary choice and

Victor. O movimento separatista do norte goiano (1821-23): desconstruindo o discurso fundador da formação territorial do Tocantins. *Revista Sapiência: sociedade, saberes e práticas educacionais*. UEG, vol. 3, n. 1, p. 63-84, 2014.

34 MUNIZ, João de Palma. *Adesão do Grão-Pará à Independência*. 2. edição, Belém: Conselho Estadual de Cultura, 1973, p. 366-367.

more anchored in concerns about what kind of state would be created, whether more liberal or more conservative, whether with more or less rights. In this extreme division, the coming of the armed force commanded by Grenfell was not enough to simply impose its will on this or any province, but it seems to have been very effective in subsidizing the position of one of the groups in the dispute, becoming the “point of balance”. This is evident when one realizes that the importance of the forces commanded by Grenfell extended far beyond August 1823, the official date of Pará’s “accession” to the Empire.

In this sense, on October 15, two months after the arrival of the imperial forces, an uprising of part of the troops demanded the resignation of the government and the inauguration of new members with a more radical political agenda. The provincial government fell without being able to offer any resistance and reports show a complete loss of control over the capital, whether of the old or the new government, with looting in sequences and intimidation of all kinds. In the midst of this framework, who were the political forces of Pará begging for support? Exactly to Grenfell who gathered his 90 men and a similar number among the sailors of various flags anchored in Belém. With these men, similar to what Cochrane would do a year later in Maranhão, he made himself absolute master of the situation, leading the political forces of the province to a shameful situation: on October 16, he managed to disarm all the rebels and subsequently shot five men in a summary manner. He arrested 256 and placed Batista Campos, one of the most influential politicians of this period until the Regency, in front of a cannon to confess his participation in the uprising, only not being carried out his sacrifice by the intervention of other politicians. Not only that, as the arrest of more than two hundred people was unsafe in Belém, again the government begged Grenfell to resolve the situation, which ended in carnage: the English mercenary took the prisoners to the so-called Clown Brig, and the next day, with the exception of four, all were dead, in one of the greatest massacres of the nineteenth century.

In a normal situation, the English mercenary would be quickly criminalized by the government and, without exaggeration, imprisoned. But in the specific framework it would be easier to do the opposite. The fact is that, despite the heavy repression and carnage in the Clown Brig, the

rebellion spread, which made the province's government increasingly depend on Grenfell. But how to understand that with an almost ridiculous military force, he was increasingly indispensable? As stated at the beginning of this article, precisely from this period until 1824, in almost the entire length of the province, from Cameté to Santarém, a revolt spread that had as one of its main engines precisely the members of the armed forces and, inside, indigenous people who saw independence as a revolutionary movement that would bring, among other social changes, the end of the compulsory work to which they were subjected. Therefore, for them, independence as it was taking shape in Belém as a conservative movement of the status quo was a usurpation, and the "Clown Brig massacre" a symbol that more radical movements would be eliminated. The movement that became common in the province was the growing number of deserters from the army who escaped to the villages, where not only rebellion began, but also the local forces gave new deserters to the movement.

In the context that the armed forces of Pará were the least reliable institutions for public authorities, Grenfell's forces – supposedly less likely to ally with the rebels – were seen on several occasions as the last frontier for social subversion of the province. Even Grenfell saw himself as such – before and after the military uprising of October 1823 – and more than once asked Cochrane for reinforcements, saying that he was a fragile guarantee of peace in the province. When at the end of February 1824 the Leopoldina frigate was ready – taking it to Rio de Janeiro was an order from Cochrane – Grenfell warned the government of Pará that he would leave the province the following month. The reactions show what his role had been in Belém until then: the English vice-consulate protested that the government said openly that without Grenfell it was not able to guarantee the life of anyone in the capital, requesting that in the face of this, it be given great ease for any English to leave the territory of Pará. The following government letters sent to Rio de Janeiro outline an Apocalypse, calling for military and financial reinforcements and predicting that the province was about to be lost to the civilized world³⁵.

35 MACHADO, André Roberto de Arruda. *A quebra da mola real das sociedades: a crise política do Antigo Regime Português na província do Grão-Pará (1821-25)*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2010.

If the role of the wars of independence in Brazil was, above all, to strengthen one of the political and social groups in very divided and conflicted provinces, it should also be indicated that there was always a very clear pattern of who could count on the help of these forces: obviously, the groups that tended to submit to the government of Rio de Janeiro and, without exception, these forces never lent themselves to social groups that saw independence as a social revolution in a broad sense. On the contrary, in all cases the troops sent by Rio de Janeiro worked hard to avoid any possibility of success of the most radical social change projects.

Take the case of Bahia. There is a certain consensus behind João José Reis' assertion that a part of the Bahia elite embraced the cause of Independence because they wanted to remove this banner from the men who defended radical changes in society, such as João Primo and Francisco Sabino da Rocha Vieira, both "mulattos" as said in the period, famous for their military bravery and radicalism that will even lead revolts to the Regency. Labatut, the French mercenary, did not ally himself with the radicals, regardless of whether they were in favor of D. Pedro I. Instead, he will arrest Sabino and demobilize troops formed by indigenous peoples. It is true that, as happened in other parts of America, Labatut tried to arm the enslaved to defend the cause of Rio de Janeiro, without having orders from the Court to do so. Although clearly not intended to foment radicalism, this initiative of the French mercenary contributed to the slave masters breaking with him in Bahia, making it clear that they would not tolerate any breach for more radical social projects³⁶.

In Pernambuco, the picture is exactly the same. After all, as it turned out, the external forces supported the groups that opposed the men of 1817 and their radicalized agenda. In Pará, this picture is also crystal clear: it was not enough for the mutinous indigenous people to enter the villa-

36 REIS, João José. O Jogo Duro do Dois de Julho: o "Partido Negro" na independência da Bahia. In: REIS, João José; SILVA, Eduardo. *Negociação e Conflito: a resistência negra no Brasil escravista*. São Paulo: Cia das Letras, 1989; SOUZA FILHO, Argemiro Ribeiro de. *Confrontos políticos e redes de sociabilidade, Bahia 1821-1823*. Tese (Doutorado em História Social) – Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2011. KRAAY, Hendrik. "Em outra coisa não falavam os pardos, cabras e crioulos": o "re-
crutamento" de escravos na guerra de independência da Bahia. *Revista Brasileira de História*. São Paulo, v. 22, n. 43, 2002.

ges cheering the Emperor and say that they wanted to defend the true "cause of independence". Grenfell never supported them and saw in the action of these men the threat of barbarism. The peace the English mercenary said he promoted in Belém, albeit in a tenuous way, was the one that wanted to move away from the social rupture.

Thus, the wars of independence did not lend themselves only to guaranteeing a vision of independence as planned in Rio de Janeiro. They were also instrumental in making other, more socially and politically radical, Independence projects unfeasible. Conservatism does not come from the passivity of dissidents, but from their defeat. The fact that they are stillborn political projects is what explains, to a large extent, the fact that Brazilians, in general, associate independence with a conservative project and know little about the aspirations for greater social change that circulated at that time. This is the subject of our next topic.

3. Independences that did not happen

Sérgio Guerra Filho resumes a precious correspondence from the then governor of Bahia on the eve of the expulsion of Portuguese troops from this province. What Guerra Filho points out is that the governor made it clear that his biggest concern was not the expulsion of the Portuguese, which he knew was a matter of time. The great concern expressed in the correspondence was the day after the expulsion of the Portuguese: how to control the population that was agitated? How to guarantee the social order³⁷?

The historiography is rich in examples of authorities and intellectuals who recorded these days in Bahia emphasizing that the air was pure revolutionary electricity. Sierra y Mariscal recalled that among the deputies elected by Bahia to the Lisbon Courts were Cipriano Barata and Lino Cou-

37 GUERRA FILHO, Sérgio Armando Diniz. O Povo e a Guerra: participação das camadas populares nas lutas pela independência no Brasil e na Bahia. Dissertação (Mestrado em História Social) – Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, 2014.

tinho, considered as the leaders of the “Democratic party”³⁸. An informant of the Portuguese Crown, of French origin, at all times made comparisons between Bahia and Haiti³⁹. It was not by chance: black men, whether free or enslaved, were expressing very different future projects from those desired by the political elite. Some documents seized at the end of 1821 set the tone for this scenario: its bearers were a slave and a free black man. Its authorship was attributed to the aforementioned João Primo, a free and rich black man, one of the best-placed traders in Bahia. The contradiction between Primo’s economically wealthy position and his exclusionary racial condition exploded in the seized papers that aimed at radical social change: in addition to claiming the right of peoples to rebellion, being able to depose governments and kill those who deprived them of life, Primo sentences something that needed to change: the belief that certain races were born to command and others to obey. An idea, undoubtedly, reckless in a slave society⁴⁰.

Although the joining in the armed forces, as a rule by recruitment, was, both in Portuguese America and in the Empire of Brazil, a misfortune from which all who could flee, independence led many black men to take up arms aspiring to social ascension in some cases, social change in others and sometimes both. Primo sought in the armed struggle a clear social change. Supposedly not radical, another black man who put himself in arms was Antonio Pereira Rebouças, the father of André Rebouças, future abolitionist. Shyster and self-taught, while Rebouças was in Bahia his feats of war earned him recognition and he reached a post in the provisional government. However, it was only by stepping outside his territory and aspiring to migrate to Court that Antonio Rebouças realized that any act of arrogance of a black man in this period was an act of insubordination:

38 SOUZA FILHO, Argemiro Ribeiro de. *Confrontos políticos e redes de sociabilidade, Bahia 1821-23*. Tese (Doutorado em História Social) – Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2011.

39 REIS, João José. *O Jogo Duro do Dois de Julho: o “Partido Negro” na independência da Bahia*. In: REIS, João José; SILVA, Eduardo. *Negociação e Conflito: a resistência negra no Brasil escravista*. São Paulo: Cia das Letras, 1989;

40 SOUZA FILHO, Argemiro Ribeiro de. *Confrontos políticos e redes de sociabilidade, Bahia 1821-23*. Tese (Doutorado em História Social) – Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 2011.

he almost failed to leave Bahia because he was confused with another black man, only being released because he was a known name. Only one of the various embarrassments to which Rebouças would be submitted, whether in the Court, whether in the provinces in positions appointed by the government, always due to the color of his skin, despite being a name well known throughout the Empire. As Keila Grinberg, his attentive scholar, recalls, his simple existence and the exercise of positions was an affront to gentlemen who were conscientious in maintaining the *status quo* and for whom, contrary to what Rebouças believed, any brown or black man could not or should not aspire to be a general⁴¹.

Less famous than Primo or Rebouças, a crowd of black men were part of Bahia's independent armed forces. Some free, some enslaved. Some via recruitment, others running from their masters⁴². But it was not just any membership. What united all these men was the search for freedom, for an independence that was not just about disconnecting or remaining united to Lisbon. While some enslaved people wrote petitions to the Lisbon Courts arguing that constitutional freedom should also mean an end to captivity, to the almost deadly indignation of the lady of Engenho Maria Bárbara Garcez Pinto⁴³, others saw in the army the path to freedom, as happened in other parts of America. It was this scenario that caused concern in the governor's letters cited at the beginning of this item: after all, what would the day after Independence be like? Would everyone lay down their arms, as they would consider that their goals had been achieved?

As expected, this was not the case in Bahia or in other parts of the new Brazilian Empire. The entry of so many black men into the armed for-

41 GRINBERG, Keila. *O Feador dos Brasileiros: cidadania, escravidão e direito civil no tempo de Antônio Pereira Rebouças*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2002.

42 KRAAY, HENDRIK. "Em outra coisa não falavam os pardos, cabras e crioulos": o "recrutamento" de escravos na guerra de independência da Bahia. *Revista Brasileira de História*. São Paulo, v. 22, n. 43, 2002.

43 REIS, João José. *O Jogo Duro do Dois de Julho: o "Partido Negro" na independência da Bahia*. In: REIS, João José; SILVA, Eduardo. *Negociação e Conflito: a resistência negra no Brasil escravista*. São Paulo: Cia das Letras, 1989.

ces changed their constitution and identity in Bahia. In addition, there was a clear dissatisfaction between what was the aspiration before Independence and the limits of the social ascension of these men after the rupture with Portugal. The most direct consequence of this was the so-called Periquitos revolt, already in 1824, when the third army regiment – precisely the one that gathered the black men – made an impressive uprising of great consequences: after all, they were able to kill the governor of arms and have the city of Salvador at their feet for a brief moment⁴⁴.

The way in which the repression of the Periquitos revolt took place, at the same time, helps to understand the gap between the conservative independence that was imposed and the aspirations that were defeated at the time of independence. First, Hendrik Kraay recalls that it was fundamental to the defeat of the Periquitos – the regiment where black men were concentrated in the army – precisely an armed force of Afro-descendants, only in the form of militias. The fact that the latter had a more affluent position in Bahian society meant that their aspirations were of another nature in relation to black men in the army, much more afraid that the social changes caused by independence would reach them as well⁴⁵. Undoubtedly, a fact that demonstrates the high complexity of this society: sharing the condition of a black man, or an indigenous, or a free poor man did not mean holding the same aspirations for changes to be brought about by independence, since the social differences within these groups made some more refractory to changes, while others gave their lives for them. Another important consequence of the Periquitos revolt is that it helps to understand why independence took place as we know it: all non-white men who were in the Bahian army were expelled from the province. An extreme action, of enormous strength, which showed that it was not enough to defeat those who aspired to other outcomes for

44 KRAAY, HENDRIK. "Em outra coisa não falavam os pardos, cabras e crioulos": o "recrutamento" de escravos na guerra de independência da Bahia. *Revista Brasileira de História*. São Paulo, v. 22, n. 43, 2002.

45 KRAAY, Hendrik. *Política Racial, Estado e Forças Armadas na época da independência na Bahia, 1790-1850*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2011.

independence: it was necessary to throw salt on the earth, hoping that nothing would ever flourish from there.

Another point that deserves attention in the revolt of Periquitos and helps to resume one of the initial provocations of this text: the fact that it occurred in 1824 again calls into question the traditional chronology of independence, showing that it was completely open at least two years after the consecrated year of 1822. Far from being an isolated fact, 1824 seems to have been a central chronological milestone in independence, as several factors limit the political choices of many provinces in addition to being in the orbit of Rio de Janeiro. Just to mention a few examples: in Portugal the possibilities of military reconquest of America due to internal disputes for the Crown fades; it is the year of outbreak and defeat of the Confederation of Ecuador; Cochrane makes a violent intervention in Maranhão, where there were also focuses of sympathy to the Confederates; the rebels in Pará are defeated with more radical political projects of independence, as well as other aspirations such as the return to subordination to Lisbon or the connection to other configurations of the State, such as the Confederation of Ecuador.

When the independence process begins or ends is a classic theme of Brazilian historiography. Following the trail of István Jancsó, in a refinement of Fernando Novais' ideas, it seems clear that independence, as it happened, was only one of the possible answers to the real problem: the crisis of the Old Portuguese Regime, materialized in the evidence that the traditional forms of reproduction of social life no longer worked⁴⁶. In this sense, despite the specificities of the wars of independence, Ubiratan Araújo is right to say that there is a certain rebel continuity in Bahia between the sedition test of 1798 and Sabinada, the latter led by Francisco Sabino da Rocha Vieira already mentioned here as one of the radicals of independence imprisoned by Labatut⁴⁷. In fact, this is not a particularity

46 JANCÓSÓ, István. A sedução da liberdade: cotidiano e contestação política no final do século XVIII. In: SOUZA, Laura de Mello (org.). *História da Vida Privada no Brasil: cotidiano e vida privada na América Portuguesa*. São Paulo: Cia das Letras, 1997.

47 ARAUJO, Ubiratan Castro de. A política dos homens de cor no tempo da independência. *Clio: Revista de pesquisa histórica*, v. 19, n. 1, 2001.

of Bahia. With the exception perhaps of Rio Grande de São Pedro, all the other provinces in which the most expressive “Regency Revolts” took place were stages before major conflicts in independence and, not infrequently, the protagonists of the two conflicts were the same. This in itself shows that independence in many cases has not solved the fundamental problems. The aspirations of the independence that did not happen were silenced by the repression, but remained latent and exploded in some cases again in the Regency Revolts.

But after all, what was the fundamental problem? What was the ultimate goal of these independence that didn’t happen? Perhaps the best synthesis was made by the bishop of Pará, Romualdo Coelho. Also after independence, already in October 1823, Coelho watched frightened the spread of the revolt in Pará, this already mentioned so many times here and which was led by indigenous people, many deserters of the army. In a letter to the provincial government, Coelho sentenced:

[...] The Constitution, giving too much eagerness and freedom to passions, broke the royal spring of well-established societies ...
What I infer, distinguished Gentlemen, from all events, what surely must hurt the heart of every honest man is that everyone wants to command and no one obeys ...⁴⁸

In the accurate diagnosis of the bishop of Pará, the traditional forms of life no longer responded to the desire for a new freedom and this made men unsubmitive. Shortly before independence in Pará, army officer Ladislau Monteiro Baena made the same diagnosis in other words: he accused constitutionalism again of having loosened the discipline in the troops, since he made these men believe in all the “transitional forms of the Society can forge ambition”⁴⁹. To some extent, the above lines reverberated the feeling of uneasiness, of things out of place, in American and European society after the French Revolution that, together with the Ame-

48 APEP – Códice 713, d. 63.

49 BAENA, Antonio Ladislau Monteiro. *Compêndio das Eras da Província do Pará*. Belém: Universidade Federal do Pará, 1969.

ican Revolution, opened up the crisis of the Old Regime. Not by chance, the diagnoses above remind both Edmund Burke, an English conservative and famous critic of the French Revolution, for whom the great ill done with the fall of the Bastille was to despise the social forms supported by tradition and to aim for other new social arrangements⁵⁰. In a way, intuitively, analyzing, but also living those days, these men realized a change in the perspective of time that was later synthesized in Koselleck's famous proposition for whom the perspective of time after the French Revolution is that of an open, almost unpredictable future without the obligation of ballast in tradition⁵¹.

Therefore, it was something that was not limited to a plebiscite option between staying connected to Portugal or Rio de Janeiro. Often, the yearnings of that time passed through other configurations. Perhaps the most radical example in this sense is that of the Guarani indigenous of the missions of Rio Grande de São Pedro who between 1816 and 1817 received letters from André Artigas, the legendary indigenous leader and military strategist allied to José Artigas. Wielding the project of constitution of the so-called "League of Free Peoples" – which brought together Entre Rios, Corrientes, Santa Fé, Córdoba and part of the Missions – André Artigas calls on the indigenous people to leave Portuguese territory – where, according to him, these indigenous people were slaves – to take on a political project of which they would be protagonists⁵².

The quest for this freedom – in a broad sense – was the aspiration not only of enslaved, or of indigenous people, but of many who dreamed of radical social change, sometimes translated also into new political regimes. Friar Caneca, one of the leaders of the Confederation of Ecuador, seems to have been one of those who best translated this aspiration of

50 BURKE, Edmund. *Extratos das obras políticas e econômicas de Edmund Burke*. Tradução de José da Silva Lisboa. Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Régia, 1812.

51 KOSELLECK, Reinhart. *O Futuro Passado: contribuição à semântica dos tempos históricos*. Rio de Janeiro: Contraponto, 2006

52 MELO, Karina Moreira Ribeiro da Silva. *Histórias indígenas em contextos de formação dos Estados Argentino, Brasileiro e Uruguaio: charruas, guaranis e minuanos em fronteiras platinas (1801-1818)*. Tese (Doutorado em História Social) – Unicamp. Campinas, 2017.

freedom and who also predicted that it could be suffocated by the use of force by D. Pedro I. On the occasion of sending the Constitutional Charter granted by the Emperor to the Municipal Councils to swear fidelity, Friar Caneca gave a courageous vote in June 1824 declaring himself against the approval of this project:

“His Majesty is so convinced that the only attribution he has over the peoples is this of the power of force, which others call the *last reason of the States*, that orders us to swear the project with a blockade in sight, making us all hostilities ...

How can you now swear to a constitutional charter, which has not been given by the sovereignty of the nation, which degrades you from the society of a free and brave people to a Valongo of slaves and a corral of beasts of burden?⁵³

As is well known, Friar Caneca’s boldness was punished by his execution. But before that, he had already denounced the role of wars of independence: to stifle radical projects in the provinces through external forces that allied themselves with local groups more inclined to maintain the *status quo*. That is why we have established a conservative independence, as we know it.

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