

"CONTOS LOUCOS" AND "FANTÁSTICAS CARRANCAS": VINTISM (1820-23) IN PERNAMBUCO

MARIA DO SOCORRO FERRAZ

slinsferraz@uol.com.br

She is Associate Professor at the Department of History of the Federal University of Pernambuco (UFPE, Brazil), and underwent doctoral studies at the University of Bielefeld, from 1974 to 1980, under the supervision of Professor Johannes Helweg. She received her Ph.D. in History in 1992 at the University of São Paulo, supervised by Professor José Jobson Arruda. She was a Visiting Professor at the Faculty of History and Geography of the University of Salamanca/Spain, during the first semester of 2002. Among her publications, the following stand out: *Sertão Fronteira do Medo* (Ed. UFPE, 2015); *República Brasileira em Debate* (Ed. UFPE, 2010); *Fontes Repatriadas*, Colonial History notes (Ed. UFPE, 2006); *Sertão um Espaço Construído* (Ed. Universitária Salamanca, 2005); *Caneca, Acusação e Defesa* (Ed. UFPE, 2000); *Liberais & Liberais* (Ed. of UFPE, 1996).

Abstract

This paper examines the conflicts between liberal monarchy supporters and liberal republicans in the province of Pernambuco in the period that preceded the 1820 Porto Revolution until the independence of Brazil. It highlights the difficulties of the colonial elite in dealing administratively and politically with the two centres of power: Rio de Janeiro versus Lisbon, Pedro versus D. João VI.

Keywords

Liberalism, Constitutionalism, Elite, Pernambuco, Conflicts

How to cite this article

Ferraz, Maria do Socorro (2021). "Contos Loucos" and "Fantásticas Carrancas": Vintism (1820-23) in Pernambuco. *Janus.net, e-journal of international relations*. VOL12 N2, TD1 - Thematic dossier 200 years after the Revolution (1820-2020), December 2021. Consulted [online] in date of the last visit, <https://doi.org/10.26619/1647-7251.DT0121.3>

Article received on em July 28, 2021 and accepted for publication on September 30, 2021





"CONTOS LOUCOS" AND "FANTÁSTICAS CARRANCAS": VINTISM (1820-23) IN PERNAMBUCO¹

MARIA DO SOCORRO FERRAZ

Historian Carlos Guilherme Mota defined the insurrectionary movements that spread throughout the country in the first decades of the 19th century as the "second discovery of Brazil", highlighting the 1817 Revolution as the culmination of a discovery process (Mota, 2016:252). While the South had the São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Minas conspiracy projects, the Northeast experienced the strongest insurrection, when in Brazil the discussion about the form of government and the possible independence of the Kingdom from Portugal was pondered. The Pernambuco elite presented the most radical model of nation through the writings of Frei (Friar) Caneca (Caneca 1875 and 1976). The discussion was influenced by the enlightenment.

In 1798, D. Rodrigo de Souza Coutinho, Navy and Overseas Minister, presented a reform programme² to the *Junta de Ministros* (Board of Ministers) of Portugal based on the moderate ideas of Abbot Raynal, the liberalism of Adam Smith, and the ideas of Bishop Azeredo Coutinho, experienced when he held the position in Pernambuco and in Elvas, Portugal. This programme highlighted some points: the crisis of the colonial system combined with the world situation and the restlessness in the colony. Azeredo Coutinho had already indicated that the integration of Portugal with Brazil was necessary, as it would strengthen the ties between them. The loss of a colony such as Brazil would undermine the existence not only of the Portugal, but above all of the Portuguese monarchy and probably the autonomy of the Portuguese nation.

In the opinion of the reformers, Portugal should create two centres of political power in Brazil: one in the north and one in the south, so that they could represent Portuguese power and help each other; there should be changes in unproductive taxation, as many of the colonists' complaints were related to taxes confused with extortion and practices of authoritarian and ethically dubious officials; scientific expeditions to explore Brazil to better know its riches were planned. The exploitation of existing resources and experimenting with new cultures in Brazil were part of the new policy, which attempted to implement the changes resulting from the industrial revolution.

By 1788, Portugal had already received samples of coffee produced in Brazil. In 1795, iron ore mining started in Bonito, in the captaincy of Pernambuco. In 1798, the

¹ Article translated by Carolina Peralta.

² *Speech given before the Board of Ministers and others on matters relating to the economic and financial development of Portugal and Overseas Domains, especially Brazil* (Lyra, 1994: 245).



Portuguese government sought information about cochineal³ and recommended the creation of a Botanical Garden for the cultivation and recording of plants for the most diverse destinations.

By 1801, sprouts and seeds of sandalwood trees were already being sent from Pernambuco to Portugal. And, with the presence of the Prince Regent in Brazil, in November 1812, a Royal Notice ordered the Governor of the Captainty of Pernambuco to send vine sticks to the royal estates in Lisbon in all ships going to that port. In 1813, 100 vine sticks were sent from the Olinda Botanical Garden.⁴

This project about discovering wealth in Brazil and improving exploration methods and techniques included the training of nationals such as José Bonifácio, who studied mineralogy in Germany, and Manuel de Arruda Câmara, considered by historian José Antonio Gonsalves de Mello as the "representative model of the educated generation of the late eighteenth century" (Mello, 1982: 58). Manuel de Arruda Câmara had a doctorate in medicine from the University of Montpellier and carried out important studies in the field of botany.

He was part of a generation that focused on science, politics and the economy of Brazil, aware of its contribution to the new emerging society. Arruda Câmara applied the results of cutting-edge research from his time, carried out in France, demystifying the belief that the increase in the harvest could take place through the fermentation of any quality of grain. The cultivated Portuguese realized that the weakened colonial empire could become the new empire, articulating itself with its American colony in order to sustain the monarchy and other overseas dominions.

The list of reforms proposed by Minister Rodrigo Coutinho included the foundation of the Olinda Seminary in 1796, more as a College for young people than as a seminary for the training of priests. Two years later, to run it, the Portuguese Government appointed an enlightened man born in 1742 in the village of São Salvador dos Campos dos Goitacazes, in the captainty of Paraíba do Sul, and educated in Portugal, Bishop José Joaquim da Cunha de Azeredo Coutinho. In Pernambuco, Bishop Azeredo Coutinho had various functions and in all of them he stood out as an enlightened man, defender of the monarchy and of reforms limited to enlightened despotism. The building of the Seminary began in 1800.

Bishop Azeredo Coutinho⁵ wrote to the Prince Regent to inform him about his work in the captainty of Pernambuco, his religious activities, as general director of studies at the Olinda Seminary, as interim governor of the captainty of Pernambuco and as president of the *Junta da Fazenda* (Finance Board) in Pernambuco. He described his actions and achievements consistent with the enlightened thinking of the time: he reduced the number of curates in the main churches; he drafted a statute to educate the Portuguese youth in all the main branches of literature, not just for ecclesiastics, but for every citizen who wanted to serve the State; he set up a seminary for young women with status aimed primarily at those who wanted to be mothers; he settled four nations of rebellious Indians

³ Insect used in fabric dyeing.

⁴ This information about the transit of newly discovered or recently explored cultures in Brazil is advanced by F. A. Pereira da Costa (1951). In *Anais Pernambucanos*. Recife: Imprensa Oficial.

⁵ Biblioteca Nacional of Rio de Janeiro. Letter of 20 January 1816. *Cartas que o excmo. bispo d'Elvas, don José Joaquim da Cunha d'Azeredo Coutinho, escreveu aos excmos. generaes inglezes que mais concorrerão para a restauração de Portugal*. Por Coutinho, José Joaquim da Cunha de Azeredo, 1742-1821.



towards the State and Church; he clearly informed that, as governor, he did not allow the rich to oppress the poor; he commented on the scarcity of fresh meat in Recife and Olinda, and its abundance in the hinterlands.

To solve this disparity, he proposed opening a road between Olinda and the hinterlands, so that cattle could reach the coast, find good markets and supply them. He informed D. João about the need for a good customs in order to prevent theft; he bought a small frigate and armed it to face the pirates who infested the coasts of Pernambuco; he posted couriers and sentries all along the coast to watch enemy ships; he fought hunger in the hinterlands. As President of the Board of Finance of Pernambuco, he collected the revenues of the Royal Treasury according to products and parishes.

Portugal's efforts to modernize the colony included something not often privileged then – leisure. To the astonishment of the population, a notice to the Government of Pernambuco informed of the concession given to Francisco Antonio Todi, manager of the São Carlos theatre in Lisbon, to establish a *Casa de Sortes* in the city of Olinda. The concession, which recommended caution and public inspection, reflected the new mentality to be introduced in Brazil.⁶

While Portugal led the uplifting of the Empire from a policy of integration with its American colony, understanding its fragility in the face of more powerful nations such as France and England, the conflicts between these two empires ended up imposing a decision on the Portuguese government, which had long been thought by its leaders, but postponed.

The arrival of the royal family and the displacement of the Portuguese state apparatus to Brazil was a far-reaching positive action for the immediate future of Brazil. For the Portuguese nation, it brought the tragedy of having its territory occupied by the French, the English, the Spaniards. In short, it brought war and penury. Minister Souza Coutinho himself had already commented, in 1803, on the possibility of creating a powerful empire in Brazil. The opinion of the Marquis de Belas⁷ about this situation is quite enlightening: "With the doors of the continent closed by the French on the inside and by the British on the outside", there was no alternative for the Portuguese monarchy but to migrate to Brazil.

In the political and economic game, between France and England, Regent D. João VI, upon arriving in Brazil, made decisions favourable to England, which would also be in Brazil's interest in the short term. Regardless of the effort to maintain the forces that supported the Empire, the power bloc showed signs of disintegration. These forces did not emerge so explicitly from the state apparatus, but from civil society. (Valentim, 1993:392).

The decisions made by the Prince Regent regarding the colony, such as the opening of ports, the signing of the 1810 Treaty of Navigation and Trade and the rise of Brazil to the category of United Kingdom, led to the rupture of the power bloc. The letters of the Governors of the Kingdom are the best proof of this disintegration, which brought different results to its supporters: positive for the seigneurial/colonial bourgeoisie and negative for the mainland's bourgeoisie and aristocracy.

⁶ Costa.F.A.P.da. (1983). *Anais Pernambucanos*, vol.X. Recife, FUNDARPE.

⁷ "Memória do Marquês de Belas", not dated, cited by Ângelo Pereira (1953). *D. João VI Príncipe e Rei*, vol. III, p. 40, Lisbon, Editora Empresa Nacional de Publicidade.



Even though the results related to Brazil were positive, their distribution was not homogeneous. In the disintegration of the power bloc, the Captaincy of Pernambuco played a different role from other captaincies, which were divided between the power of Rio de Janeiro and the power of Lisbon.

In 1804, Caetano Pinto de Miranda Montenegro arrived in Pernambuco. He was Governor in Cuiabá and travelled by land, covering a distance of 670 leagues. In 1805, he was appointed governor of Angola. A petition by residents of the captaincy of Pernambuco asked the Prince Regent for his permanence, which was attended to. Until the arrival of the imperial family in Brazil, Governor Caetano Pinto de Miranda Montenegro was seen as an upright man, a good administrator, with a commendable character. For ten years he governed with prudence, did not risk major innovations, but allowed for some improvements. He listened to complaints from the poor and the rich, and was considered a "righteous man".

The changes carried out by the government of the Prince Regent helped the administration of Caetano Pinto de Miranda Montenegro. For example, commercial franchises granted by D. João began to change the habits and customs of colonial society.

Mesa Grande clerk Caetano Francisco Lumachi de Melo commented in his report that before 1799, customs revenues were much lower. From 1799 to 1810, these yields almost tripled and by 1823 amounted to more than a million.⁸

At the beginning of the 19th century, Pernambuco competed with Bahia for the second and third place in imports and exports. Rio Janeiro had the lead.

On 10 March 1808, Caetano Pinto de Miranda Montenegro was called to Rio de Janeiro by the King and stayed there until September of the same year. On his return, he brought a commendation from the Order of Christ and another, Knight in the Cape and Sword of the Ministry of Finance. Still, for the people of Pernambuco he brought with him a heavy baggage of taxes: the tenth tax on the houses, the tax on inheritances and legacies, the sugar tithe and the Prince Regent's project to invade Cayenne in French Guiana. This was in addition to other humiliations to guarantee the Court's luxury, expenses that encumbered the national treasury.

Despite the good collection of revenue in Pernambuco, from the point of view of some products, especially sugar, one can speak of a decrease in income, given the expenses, including those incurred by the occupation of Cayenne by the troops. The social situation was oppressive because of taxes. Portugal declared war on France, prepared to occupy Cayenne and demanded 1000 men from Pernambuco for this military expedition. The Governor approved this new tax policy.

Father Dias Martins noted that he returned from Rio de Janeiro with the task of sending all the Province's money to the Court, without thinking about the obligations to the creditors. In fact, these taxes were general to the entire country. However, Governor Caetano Pinto wrote to the Prince Regent about the inconvenience of simultaneously charging more taxes and taking away bread winners or loved ones from families. Despite

⁸ Biblioteca Nacional of Rio de Janeiro. *Relatório do escrivão da Mesa Grande Francisco Lumachi de Melo apresentado ao Governo do Rio de Janeiro*. Registro de Correspondência 1808/1833, CGPP 9, 50.



the reaction of the people from Pernambuco, 300 men were sent to occupy Cayenne in 1809.

Brazil's situation was one of continuous deficit and Portugal's one of complete degradation: plundered, its trade interrupted and its fields deserted. In July 1811, the Prince Regent ordered a loan to be raised in the Kingdom, guaranteeing payment with the rents of the provinces of Bahia, Pernambuco and Maranhão. The aim was to restore industry and farming in Portugal. In Hipólito da Costa's opinion, this loan taken out in the Kingdom impoverished it, as the money drained into the pockets of American and other merchants. (Costa, 2001).

In 1812, the economic-financial and socio-political situation in Portugal was very difficult. In Lisbon, the discount on paper money was 25%, given the disappearance of metallic coins, exchanged for foreign goods, mainly from the United States. Even the remittances of pounds from London to pay British and national troops also ended up falling into the pockets of American traders. A law prohibited the exit of gold and silver, but it was useless. According to current opinions, encouraging trade with Brazil was the only chance for Portugal to get its currency back.

At the end of 1812, Portugal's deficit was 12 million cruzados. In addition to the purchase of food, the military expenses weighed on the finances. D. João tries to obtain a loan from England, but failed. He had to sell the Crown's free property.⁹

The finances were in a mess. The navy had more officers than warships. In Brazil, bills of exchange, interest on loans and civil servants were no longer paid on time, despite all coffers being scraped, including the deceased and absent, in the words of Hipólito da Costa (2001). Portugal checked what was collected in the Captaincies, and suggested the following: collect the amounts of the Captaincies, calculated in 1530 *contos*, paying the expenses through *Banco do Brasil*; Brazil's expenses should be reduced and revenue increased. Rio de Janeiro, Bahia and Pernambuco had the best revenues, so these should be taxed. The Government should tax imports heavily.

And would the 1810 Treaty allow it? How would governments in Brazil and Portugal react?

The Lisbon regency forbade the exit of metals; the Rio de Janeiro government did the same in Brazil's other provinces. Payments would be made in bills from *Banco do Brasil* or dealers, redeemable at the respective markets.

Changes in import taxes took place much later and very weak. As Rio de Janeiro became the centre of mercantile activities, it was more dependent on England than Pernambuco, which at this point was preparing to leave the Empire. The businessmen of Rio de Janeiro, at the end of the 18th century, formed a pressure group, independent of the rural aristocracy – the great landowners. Due to the volume of their business, they were able to accumulate capital and provide credit to the King and rural landowners.

The position of merchants in Rio de Janeiro was far superior to that of merchants in Pernambuco. More affluent than their Pernambuco counterparts and enjoying greater social prestige, they were even honoured with the order of Christ, which gave them

⁹ In the Royal Charter of 13 December 1812, D. João authorized the sale of the Crown's free property to cover insolvent expenses. Índice das Cartas de Leis, Alvarás, Decretos e Cartas Régias de 1812. Available at http://bd.camara.leg.br/bd/bitstream/handle/bdcamara/18322/collecao_leis_1812_parte1.pdf?sequence=1



aristocratic status. The businessmen of Pernambuco, on the other hand, massacred by the *Companhia de Comercio da Paraíba e Pernambuco*, only became ennobled if they became landowners, and they were not familiar with the credit and interest system.

The Pernambuco Revolution of 1817 was the result of these new standards introduced by Souza Coutinho's reform project and by the circumstances of the time. Led by Pernambuco residents, but with important support in Paraíba, Ceará and Rio Grande do Norte, it is a good example of the fractures that gradually undermined the Empire. To get an idea of these divisions, Caetano Pinto de M. Montenegro, on 5 March 1817, therefore on the eve of the Revolution, reaffirmed to the inhabitants of Pernambuco the king's intention to unite the kingdoms and denounce the infidels:

People from Pernambuco: calm your spirits, do not listen to rumours: some inconsiderate words uttered in excess of joy, do not decide the character of men nor make them infidels and traitors. His majesty has just united all his kingdoms into one: this happy union must spread. What basis could these parties have to divide you? We are all Portuguese, we are all subjects of the same Sovereign, we are all fellow citizens of the same United Kingdom: men are not distinguished according to their place of birth, but according to love and fidelity to their King, and their homeland, this being the honourable motto of the Portuguese for their talents, virtues and the accuracy with which they fulfil their duties¹⁰.

In response to the numerous proclamations by rulers loyal to the King, revolutionaries also published them – like the one below, at the end of the Revolution on 15 April 1817:

Whoever you are

We have read your proclamations, worthy of those who make them and worthy of those who spread them. And we admire the grading of your threats: in the first, on 21 March, you were happy to call us unworthy; on the two of 29 March, you refer to us as infamous, despicable and other epithets that certainly belong to you more than to us. You require our death and promise to use the sword if you do not establish the Laws of your good King. See how different we are, we do not hassle you, we do not hate you, but we will play murder with murder, fire with fire and war with war. We do not fear you, come, you will disembark and experience what free men are like. In payment for your three proclamations, we send you another three. I warn you that if any of our raftsmen suffers any insult, we have in our hands your Marshals, Brigadiers, and officers who will pay head for head.

House of the Provisional Government in Pernambuco, 15 April 1817.

Signed: Father João Ribeiro Pessoa, Domingos José Martins, José Luiz de Mendonça, Manoel Correia de Araújo, Manoel José Pereira Caldas, Antonio Carlos Ribeiro de Andrade, Miguel João de Almeida e Castro.¹¹

¹⁰ Biblioteca Nacional of Rio de Janeiro. Documentos Históricos: *Revolução de 1817* (1954) v. CVI

¹¹ Idem.



Upon learning about the outbreak of the revolt, D. João ordered the departure of the fleet destined to block the port of Recife under the command of Admiral Rodrigo José Ferreira Lobo. An army with eight battalions, artillery and cavalry left Rio on 4 May in 10 sailboats. The general command was entrusted to General Luís do Rego Barreto, who considered the liberal and revolutionary ideas of the Pernambuco inhabitants to be insane.

Due to the influence of the literature of French and American liberals, introduced in the Colony in various ways, including by Arruda Câmara, these dreams of independence seemed to Luís do Rego "*contos loucos*" (crazy tales). He pejoratively called the battalions formed and directed by the natives "*fantásticas carrancas*" (whimsical grimaces).¹²

The situation of the revolutionaries became untenable. Attempts to support the neighbouring provinces, Paraíba, Rio Grande do Norte and Ceará were successful, but attempts to obtain military support from the United States were unsuccessful no matter how much effort the Freemason had made. The exchange of proclamations between the parties' military leaders also had no effect. The Rio de Janeiro Court sent a group of men presided over by General Luís do Rego Barreto, who for consecutive years subjected Pernambuco's inhabitants to many vexations. The main leaders of the Revolution were sentenced to death, dismemberment and their remains were displayed in public squares.

Governor Luís do Rego Barreto imprisoned Pernambuco citizens right, left and centre. He punished some by exiling them to Africa. Others were sent to various prisons in Brazil, and forty-two were tried by courts in Lisbon, on the accusation of being supporters of independence. As a result, the Minister of Justice in Portugal ordered the magistrate of Belém to take the prisoners to the Castle, to the *Regedor das Justiças*, and to prosecute them immediately.

According to Hipólito José da Costa, the prisoners triumphantly paraded through the streets of Lisbon, exposed to the horrified eyes of the inhabitants, escorted by cavalry and infantry with drumrolls and pomp. And since their clothes had got held in their trunks at Customs, they weren't dressed with dignity. The forty-two prisoners met with the weight of the Portuguese Court's absolutism, in the humiliation of this parade and in the triumph of Governor Luís do Rego.

General Luís do Rego Barreto believed that he had defeated the "*contos loucos*" and the "*fantásticas carrancas*". However, the "crazy tales" crossed the Atlantic and inspired Portuguese constitutionalists, victorious with the Constitutionalist 1820 Revolution in Portugal, which forced King João VI to return to Portugal and sign a liberal constitution, approved by elected deputies from various parts of the Kingdom, led by the *Cortes*.

Supportive of the liberal constitutionalists of Pernambuco, the Lisbon *Cortes* participating in the 1820 Revolution ordered the release of the revolutionary survivors of 1817¹³ and

¹² An allusion to the heads of monsters that were placed on the prow of boats on the São Francisco River, representing ferocious animals, supposedly to chase away evil spirits.

¹³ After the trial of the cases of the 42 Pernambuco prisoners in *Casa da Suplicação*, they were released and received in Pernambuco with great festivities. The final judgment took place on 27 October 1821. (Costa, 2001: 325)



created Governing Boards in all the provinces in an attitude of disrespect towards absolutist governors, such as Luís do Rego Barreto.

As in Pernambuco in 1817, the military and magistrates of the city of Porto were already preparing the constitutionalist revolution some years before August 1820. José Ferreira Borges, a member of the Council of the 1820 Porto Revolution, was a member of the *Sinédrio*, an association founded in Porto in 1817 by Manuel Fernandes Tomás, whose purpose was to prepare a liberal revolution in Portugal.

The Portuguese situation at the time brought dissatisfaction to the bourgeoisie, farmers and the military. It meant the closing of factories, the abandonment of agriculture, the delay in the payment of wages and salaries to the military, British tutelage, the Brazilian primacy and the invasions that Portugal suffered by France and Spain. With the opening of Brazilian ports 'to friendly nations', such as England, British competition destroyed the Portuguese economy.

The 1820 Porto Revolution faced additional problems: the Portuguese absolutist monarchists, who followed D. João VI, did not opt for the King's return. Brazil and the divided Brazilians took different positions: some preferred the constitutionalism of the *Cortes* to the government of Regent Pedro; the English minister Thornton and the Count of Palmela pressured the King to send his son Pedro or return to Lisbon, thus putting a stop to the democratic side of the 1820 movement; and the Austrians, although enlightened, did not support the 1820 movement, and remained absolutist.¹⁴

The political arguments of the liberal constitutionalists and of the more conservative Portuguese originated in the two trends within the Portuguese monarchy: absolutism and constitutionalism. The Portuguese constitutionalists presented the Constitution as the remedy for all the ills that afflicted Portugal, even hinting at the recolonization of Brazil. The bourgeoisie of the city of Porto were promised industries that could transform Brazilian raw materials into manufactures - cotton into textiles, raw sugar into refined sugar and its distribution in the European market.

How about the 1810 Treaty with England, would it be disrespected, restructured?

The bourgeoisie needed D. João VI's relationship with England for the construction of the industrial revolution, including new negotiations with the British. The constitutionalists, in an attempt to calm the King, tried to naturalize liberalism by linking it to tradition, recalling the fictional *Lamego Cortes* (Lima, 1997: 16).

What changed in Brazil with the victory of *Vintism*?

The Portuguese living in Brazil, both merchants and State bureaucrats, and Brazilians well positioned with the King, did not want to lose the advantages obtained with the coming of the Court. They were aware that the return of the King would affect them, as Brazil would lose its status as United Kingdom and as head of the Portuguese Government.

¹⁴ There is no detailed study on the interests of Emperor Francisco I, of the Holy Roman Empire, in marrying his daughter Maria Leopoldina to Pedro de Alcântara - this royal house probably found Brazil important for its politics, especially in relation to the English or they could play further by investing on the American continent.



D. João VI travelled to Portugal to attend the Constitutionalist *Cortes* in April 1821. His son Pedro became the Prince Regent. Unlike the Portuguese constitutionalist liberals, Silvestre Pinheiro Ferreira¹⁵ predicted that the return of the King would bring irreparable damage to the Portuguese Empire. The facts proved this assertion. Pedro's power was much less accepted than the power of D. João VI. Brazilians suddenly had to comply with the laws, orders and decrees coming from two arm wrestling centres of power: the Constitutionalist *Cortes* based in Lisbon, and Pedro's Regency based in Rio de Janeiro. The Portuguese living in Brazil, most of them merchants, and the military pressured him to accept orders from Lisbon, and appeals for this to happen became constant in the main Brazilian cities.

The decree of 1 October 1821 of the Lisbon *Cortes* created Provisional Boards in the Provinces, which reduced Pedro's power, as the customs' administration and the military command were Lisbon's responsibility, which led to fights between opposing factions.

The provinces of Pará, Maranhão and Bahia started to obey the *Cortes* of Lisbon. In Rio de Janeiro, the Portuguese garrison rebelled and forced the Prince to form a Provisional Board dependent on Lisbon. The provinces of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Minas Gerais were directly governed by the Prince Regent.

In the discussion of the Lisbon Constitutionalist *Cortes* on the administration of the overseas territories, the problem of administrative uniformity between Portugal and Brazil came into the agenda. The post of Governor of the Provinces, with its absolutist slant, had no counterpart in Portugal after the 1820 Revolution, and it was soon replaced by the election of the Provisional Boards. The newly elected Boards, in the spirit of the constitutionalist movement, generally had Brazilians, who felt institutionally watched by the Portuguese military and were reduced to mere inspectors of Portuguese customs duties. Without a clear definition of the Prince's power limit, the Boards were, in fact, helpless entities used by the two centres of power: Rio de Janeiro and Lisbon.

The events in Pernambuco in this period were *sui generis* and deserve special analysis.

The news of the success of the constitutionalist movement in the city of Porto reached Rio de Janeiro and five days later it was known in Pernambuco. Governor Luís do Rego organized and presided over the Constitutional Governing Council of the Province of Pernambuco on 30 August 1821. He did not want to officially disclose the news. For a year, he wanted to hide the constitutionalist victory from everyone, which was impossible, as periodicals, pamphlets, and loose information reached the Province. On this, Denis Bernardes wrote:

Contrary to what happened in Bahia and Rio de Janeiro, the Portuguese troops in Pernambuco did not support the constitutionalist movement, remaining faithful to the Governor's orders. This explains, among other reasons, the fact that about a year elapsed between the arrival of the first news of the Porto revolution and the election of a Board, within the new rules approved by the Cortes and Luís do Rego's ability to remain leader of the Government. (Bernardes, 2001: 368).

¹⁵ Silvestre Pinheiro Ferreira was in Brazil as Minister of Foreign Affairs and War, from 1810 to 1821, and also as his advisor. Between 1814 and 1815 he wrote by order of the Prince Regent "Memórias Políticas sobre os Abusos Gerais e o Modo de os Reformar e Prevenir a Revolução Popular" (Silvestre Ferreira, 2012).



The county of Goiana¹⁶ did not want to accept the command of Luís do Rego and did not recognize this Council as legitimate. A large part of the Pernambuco counties supported its decision. A few from the south of the Province declared themselves obedient to Luís do Rego. The liberals from Pernambuco had had a bitter experience of the repression of the 1817 Revolution. So they thought it would be better to wait, reorganize the Province, wait for the events between Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro, and between the defence of Portuguese constitutionalism and independence mixed with authoritarianism led by regent Pedro. For these Pernambuco liberals, war in Brazil was imminent, and it could be long, exhausting both power centres. For this region, the republic could no longer be a dream.

Luís do Rego Barreto found out about the constitutionalist movement in Goiana and arrested several military and civilian officers. He immediately sent an official letter to King D. João VI, reporting on the latest events in Pernambuco. He confirmed that Pernambuco was uprising and that there were parties that wanted absolute independence from Portugal and that at the moment they were governed by the Constitution of America. Governor Luís do Rego still had Portuguese troops from the Algarves Battalion. On 21 August 1821, the Regent sent an official letter authorizing the creation of a Provisional Government Board in Pernambuco. On 17 September 1821, Rego sent it to the Recife Chamber for action. However, at this point, Recife was uprising. This letter was published in the press. Olinda tried a conciliation, but Goiana did not accept it.

The Goiana revolt was called Temporary Constitutional Government and publicly supported the Porto Revolution. On 10 October 1821, the Goiana Board sent an official letter to the King listing the recent political events in Pernambuco, justifying its creation and denouncing the abuses of Luís do Rego Barreto¹⁷.

Then, it sent an envoy to the King and the *Cortes* – Manoel Clemente Cavalcanti de Albuquerque – showing it did not support the independence movement. The creation of the Board was ordered by the crown appointed judge, with representatives of the clergy, nobility, military and people, on 29 August 1821. On 21 September of the same year, there was a bloody battle in Olinda, between the forces of Goiana and those of General Luís do Rego.

The forces of Goiana marched on Recife against the troops commanded by the General and, in the village of Beberibe, they made their camp. The siege of Recife by the Goiana people ranged from Rio Doce, in the north, to Afogados, in the south. Afraid of being

¹⁶ Goiana was founded before 1570, and was originally inhabited by Caetés and Potiguares Indians. It rose to the category of parish in 1568. At that time it belonged to the captaincy of Itamaracá. Due to its expansion, it became a village, then hosting the Chamber and Justice and becoming the head of the Captaincy of Itamaracá. Part of the captaincy of Itamaracá was incorporated into the Captaincy of Pernambuco in 1763. Goiana was the first municipality in Pernambuco to declare the abolition of slavery, before the law of 13 May 1888. See Galvão (2006).

¹⁷ The governor of Pernambuco imposed changes that harmed the economy of Goiana. This village provided meat to Recife and other places; the tax for this service was high. The governor banned this trade and favoured another village, Vitória de Santo Antão. The tax remained high and this shook the economy of Goiana. Another episode that may seem simple, but was demoralizing for the people of Goiana: the Governor occupied the Vila at night and with his troops ripped all the blinds from the windows, which protected from the sun, and then made a big fire with them. This despotic act forced the population to buy iron bars and glass, which were English product. See Ferraz (1996: 145).



crushed by the military forces of other Pernambuco counties, which joined the Goiana battalions, Governor Luís do Rego sent emissaries requesting an armistice.

His great opponent was not another general but merchant Gervásio Pires Ferreira. A businessman, he was the evaluator of the tax system of the Republic from 1817, proposing reforms and improvements. Released from prison in Lisbon on 22 February 1821, he returned to the Province with greater prestige than before. He went to Beberibe and in an agreement signed between the revolutionary forces and the General, it was decided that he would immediately embark for Lisbon with all the Portuguese battalions. This agreement took the name of the Beberibe Convention.

On 15 October 1821, an official letter arrived from Lisbon, ordering the creation of the new constitutional government, and on 26 October, the Provisional Governing Board, chaired by Gervásio Pires Ferreira¹⁸, was elected. That same day, Luís do Rego left for Lisbon, along with part of the Portuguese troops. A new governor of arms was on his way from Portugal to replace Marshal Salazar. The Board had the difficult and delicate task of informing the Prince Regent in Rio de Janeiro and His Royal Highness in Portugal of the changes that had taken place in Pernambuco, because the new Board was not an unconditional ally of either of the two powers, even if it would not explicitly comment on the matter.

The war for independence that broke out in Brazil dismantled the routine work between the provinces and the central power in Rio de Janeiro. Many administrative issues in the Province were raised daily and the Provisional Government did not have immediate answers. It was decided to convene a Grand Council, a kind of Assembly in an attempt to manage heterogeneity and to try democracy by expanding participation and responsibilities. It included landlords, priests, deputies, judges, inspectors, and soldiers.

The first measures taken by the new Governing Board involved restoring order in the Province. Some Portuguese battalions had not yet embarked, due to lack of space on the ships, which caused fear in the population.

With no military power in the Province, the Board, attentive to socio-racial issues, organized a military force composed of native people. Two companies of blacks and two of *pardos* were created and paid for this service. They were commanded by sergeants-majors of the same race and class, respectively. The "*fantásticas carrancas*" were back.

The relations between the Board presided over by Gervásio Pires and the government of Rio de Janeiro were, from the beginning, tense. The Rio de Janeiro power did not trust a Board led by an ex-revolutionary of 1817. The balance between both had always been dangerous for Pernambuco. Between the two centres of power, the Board presided over by Gervásio honoured in all its acts the *Cortes*, the King, and Lisbon as the centre of power. However, it felt helpless in its policy against the Rio de Janeiro power. The Province paid taxes to pay for the lighting and police in Rio de Janeiro. As much as Pernambuco requested a reduction in taxes, it did not receive any positive response from the two powers. The small and medium producers of brandy, a secondary elite, were not helped by Lisbon, while the large owners were not affected in their fortunes. In

¹⁸ The Provisional Governing Board was made up of the following members: Gervásio Pires Ferreira – president, Fr. Laurentino Antonio Moreira de Carvalho – secretary, and by Manuel Ignácio de Carvalho, Antonio José Vitorino Borges da Fonseca, Filipe Neri Ferreira, Joaquim José de Miranda and Bento José da Costa.



retaliation, they started to support the Prince Regent, in Rio de Janeiro. Allegations that Gervásio Pires would not support the independence proposed by Pedro and the Andrada's ministry reached the Rio court.

On 1 June 1822, the area where the members of the Pernambuco Board were meeting was invaded by envoys of the minister José Bonifácio de Andrada, representing the four military branches, forcing Gervásio Pires Ferreira to sign a document of loyalty and adherence to the regency of His Royal Highness, D. Pedro. Reacting against that mutiny, Gervásio replied that such attitude was not a regular act of the people and so he resigned from the Presidency¹⁹. One of the Rio de Janeiro envoys, João Pedro Estanislau, replied that "the people have assumed their rights, the people want it, it is necessary to obey." The ousting of Gervásio Pires Ferreira was followed by his imprisonment in Bahia. He was later sent to another prison in Lisbon.²⁰

In a confused period when national independence and liberalism were intertwined, the idea of democracy became associated with popular anarchy. The population was outraged by rumours. This state of rebellion had deeper causes, appearing in various forms, either in conflicts between the ruling class fractions or in the formation of the Colony's military battalions. This recurrent insubordination of the northern region in relation to the southern region was a sign that the model of nation that this region imposed, explained in the writings of José Bonifácio, would harm the northern region in the vision of the revolutionaries.

References

Printed Sources

Atas do Conselho do Governo de Pernambuco, vol. I, 1821a1824. (1997). Recife: CEPE Editora.

Biblioteca Nacional of Rio de Janeiro. Letter of 20 January 1816. Cartas que o excmo. bispo d'Elvas, don Hoze Joaquim da Cunha d'Azevedo Coutinho, escreveu aos excmos. generaes inglezes que mais concorrerão para a restauração de Portugal. Por Coutinho, José Joaquim da Cunha de Azeredo, 1742-1821.

Biblioteca Nacional. *Documentos Históricos: Revolução de 1817*(1954) v. CVI

Biblioteca Nacional of Rio de Janeiro. *Relatório do escrivão da Mesa Grande Francisco Lumachi de Melo apresentado ao Governo do Rio de Janeiro*. Registro de Correspondência 1808/1833, CGPP 9, 50.

Costa, F. A. P. da. (1951). *Anais Pernambucanos*, 11 volumes. Recife: Imprensa Oficial.

Discurso pronunciado perante a Junta de Ministros e outras pessoas sobre assuntos referentes ao desenvolvimento econômico e financeiro de Portugal e Domínios Ultramarinos, principalmente o Brasil Apud Lyra (1994:245).

¹⁹ Minutes of the Board of 1 June 1822 in *Atas do Conselho do Governo de Pernambuco*, vol. I, 1821-1824. (1997). Recife: CEPE Editora, p. 104.

²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 105.



Memória do Marquês de Belas, not dated, cited by Ângelo Pereira (1953). *D. João VI Príncipe e Rei*. Vol. III, p. 40, Lisbon, Editora Empresa Nacional de Publicidade.

Royal Letter of 13 December 1812, *D. João autoriza a venda de bens livres da Coroa para socorrer despesas, que estavam insolventes*. Índice das Cartas de Leis, Alvarás, Decretos e Cartas Régias de 1812. Available at: http://bd.camara.leg.br/bd/bitstream/handle/bdcamara/18322/collecao_leis_1812_parte1.pdf?sequence=1

Silvestre Pinheiro Ferreira. (2012). *Memórias políticas sobre os abusos gerais e modo de os reformar e prevenir a revolução popular [...] no Rio de Janeiro em 1811 e 1815*. Brasília, Senado Federal. Available at <http://www2.senado.leg.br/bdsf/handle/id/562748>

Bibliographic references

Alexandre, Valentim. (1993). *Os Sentidos do Império: questão nacional e questão colonial na crise do antigo regime português*. Porto: Edições Afrontamento.

Barbosa, M. do Socorro Ferraz. (2008). "Liberais constitucionalistas entre dois centros de poder". *Tempo*. Revista do Dept. de História da UFF, vol. 12, nº 24, pp. 109-136.

Bernardes, Denis A. de Mendonça. (2006). *O Patriotismo Constitucional: Pernambuco, 1820-1822*. São Paulo: Hucitec; Fapesp; Recife: UFPE.

Caneca, Fr. J. do A. D. (1875). *Obras Políticas e Literárias*. Recife: Typografia Mercantil.
_____. *Ensaio Político*. (1976). Rio de Janeiro: Editora Documentários.

Cabral, Eurico J. Campelo. (2018). *O Liberalismo em Pernambuco: as metamorfoses políticas de uma época (1800-1825)*. Recife: Editora Tarcísio Pereira.

Costa, Hipólito José da. (2001). *Hipólito José da Costa*. São Paulo: Editora 34.

Ferraz, Socorro. (1996). *Liberais & Liberais*. Recife: Editora Universitária da UFPE.

Galvão, Sebastião de Vasconcelos. *Dicionário Corográfico, Histórico e Estatístico de Pernambuco*. 2006, 2ª edição, vol. I, Ed: CEPE

Lima, Oliveira. (1986). *O Império Brasileiro*. Brasília: UNB.

Lyra, Maria de Lourdes Viana. (1994). *A Utopia do Poderoso Império Portugal-Brasil: bastidores da Política 1798-1800*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Sette Letras.

Mello, J. A. Gonsalves. (1982). *Manuel Arruda da Câmara, Obras Reunidas*. Recife: Fundação de Cultura Cidade do Recife.

Mota, Carlos Guilherme e Lopez, Adriana. (2016). *História do Brasil: uma interpretação*. São Paulo: Editora 34.

Porto, Costa. (1978). *Os Tempos de Gervásio Pires*. Recife: Secretaria de Educação e Cultura.

Silva, M. Beatriz Nizza. (2013). *Pernambuco e a Cultura da Ilustração*. Recife: Editora Universitária UFPE.