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The Royal Court in Rio de Janeiro and Napoleon's Black Legend

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For those who accompanied prince regent D. João to Brazil and advised him on the measures to be taken in the new siege of the Portuguese monarchy two major fears dictated vigilance and propaganda. They feared the seduction Napoleon and France could exert on Portuguese America, in the same way French invaders were already seducing some layers of society in Portugal. On the other side they were afraid of the ideas Spaniards from Buenos Aires could export to Brazil. The stronger fear demanded an active anti-Napoleonic propaganda; as to the other a constant alertness by the Police was enough to prevent danger.

When in 1977 I published *Cultura e sociedade no Rio de Janeiro (1808-1821)* I had already noticed what I then called "the Napoleonic cycle", that is to say, a certain number of leaflets and books that attacked the "terrible Corsican", both in Portugal and Brazil. (1) The apex of this kind of literature was attained in the years 1808 and 1809, but the interest for this kind of reading went as far as 1815, when Napoleon at last left the stage of European politics.

The long list of titles advertised in the *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro* by book dealers, more than a hundred, allows us to measure the effort dispended in the anti-Napoleonic propaganda, certainly because the enlightened Brazilian elite had been attracted to French ideas since late eighteenth century. As the Portuguese diplomatic representative in London acknowledged in 1807 to Canning, minister of Foreign Affairs, "the poison of Jacobinism" had somehow entered the blood of Brazil's inhabitants. (2) Most of these pamphlets were against the French emperor and his family; others soiled the image of well known generals of the Napoleonic Army; and finally some attacked the French in general.

We may question whether Brazil required this propaganda. In Portugal, where the clergy declaimed in the pulpit against the invaders who desecrated their churches and robbed their silver, it served the purpose of creating an incipient form of nationalism. Brazil was far away from the war scenery and if an antagonism was growing in some groups of Brazilian society it was against the British, their main competitors in international trade since 1808, when Brazilian ports were opened, and mostly since the 1810 treaties which threatened the slave trade, the most vital issue in Brazilian society. We may phrase this idea as follows: if a propaganda was needed, it was in favour of the British, not against Napoleon.

I must here recall the British strategies towards the Portuguese colony in America. Even before the prince regent's departure from Lisbon, Strangford in the Portuguese Court and Canning in London thought in terms of a new market for English goods. The secret convention signed in October 22, 1807, asked for a free port in Santa Catarina or in another Brazilian port, and it also demanded that as soon as the Portuguese Court was established in Rio de Janeiro a treaty on commerce and alliance should be signed. (3)

A new market for English merchants was opened with the royal charter signed in Bahia January 28, 1808. Though the trade permission was given to any nation in peace with the Portuguese crown, at that moment only British merchants benefited from that measure. (4) The mercantile group in Bahia immediately reacted against this concurrence and sent a petition to D. João in which they ask a rethorical question: "Why are they not coming to participate in the hard work in the agriculture and want only the

privilege of commerce?”. They argued that commerce only brought advantage to the nation which received money in exchange, not merchandise, which was the case with the British who sold much and bought very little. The Bahian merchants asked D. João not to allow the establishment of foreigners with houses of commerce in Brazil, because this permission would mean the conquest of Brazil “without blood effusion”. (5) The merchants in Rio de Janeiro addressed a similar petition to the prince regent. (6)

Between social conservatism and political innovation in Portugal

While in Brazil the first reactions were against the British seen as competitors and oppressors of local trade, and besides the French army landing in the Brazilian coast was not feared, in Portugal the situation was a much more complex one. Not only Junot chose Portuguese members of the elite for the new Council of Government, but also part of the military nobility joined the Napoleonic Army and fought in Europe. Some nobles accepted the idea of having Junot as king of Portugal, if the social status quo was maintained and they kept their privileges.

On the other hand a group of magistrates and men of letters asked Napoleon for a Constitution and a constitutional king, preferably a prince from the imperial family. They would be happy with a Constitution similar to the one given to the Warsaw duchy, with one single change in the way of the national representatives’ election. Legislative power should be divided in two chambers; and judicial power should be independent and ruled by Napoleon Code.

This Constitution was expected to change some cultural and social aspects in Portugal. Though it should declare Catholicism as the State religion, all cults should be “free, public and tolerated”. A free press was asked for. Equality before the law and abolition of the legal privileges of the nobles were demanded. Property of the Church should be put on sale. Taxes should be proportional to the revenues and applied to all inhabitants. The administration of the French empire appeared to this Portuguese intellectual elite as a model of organization and the number of civil servants should be reduced in Portugal. The statute of colonies should be changed into provinces or departments of the Portuguese kingdom and their representatives should take place in the Assembly as soon as the Constitution was given by Napoleon.

For these men Napoleon appeared as the leader who could change the Portuguese Old Regime. The words in praise of the emperor remembered to the Portuguese people the “paternal protection offered to them by the greatest monarch the world had ever seen”. That is why this representation ended with the words: “Salve Napoleon the Great! Salve his dynasty!”. (7)

In the short period between Junot’s arrival in Lisbon, November 30, 1807, and June 1808, when the movement against French occupation irrupted in Oporto, two distinct forms of acceptance of the French presence in Portugal could be detected: one of them supported Junot as their future king and wanted the maintenance of the social *statu quo*; the other thought that a deep political and social change could be attained with the Napoleonic lineage and a Constitution.

Measures of safety in Rio de Janeiro

When the Royal Press was created May 13, 1808, it remained under the supervision of the secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and War, D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, and he sought to control information through the Police intendant Paulo Fernandes Viana. This control was exerted over printed material and people, and as soon as May

28, 1809, the intendant wrote to the Customs judge alerting him against a paperback book and the advertisement of this work that was to be put in the street corners of the city. The copies of the book should remain in secrecy at the Customs deposit and not be divulged, though there was already a rumour that two copies had been diverted from the judge guard. (8) A Police public note in May 30, 1809, confirmed the tight control over printed material and also its advertisement without the Intendancy knowledge and permission.(9) The *Correio Brasiliense*, a paper published in London by the Brazilian born freemason Hipólito da Costa, transcribed in 1812 a letter written from Rio de Janeiro in which there was a complaint that freedom of the press was in the new Court siege even more restricted than in Portugal. (10)

As to the control over people, the Police intendant took this task firmly into his hands. When creating the Intendancy in May 10, 1808, the prince regent had declared that, although he wished the foreign presence in Brazil, due “to the difficult and critical circumstances of the time” there was to be “the greatest and tightest police” over those who arrived under the pretence of friendship and were in fact “true enemies and seducers”. Later the memorialist Luís Gonçalves dos Santos reported this measure as a form of defence against French influence. The intendant was supposed to be “a watchful sentinel of public safety” sending away from the Brazilian homes “the spies and the supporters (partidaristas) of the French”. He would look for “the secret crimes committed in the darkness of clubs and lodges” against State and religion. One of the intendant’s most important tasks was, according to this memorialist, the surveillance against the French “revolutionary and irreligious doctrines”. (11)

Paulo Fernandes Viana reported directly to the secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and War, who ordered that all suspects were to be imprisoned, questioned, and their papers and documents searched. At the end of the inquiry the intendant gave his opinion on their innocence or guilt. Similar orders were also sent to the other important port in the Northeast, Salvador. The Crime *ouvidor* (magistrate) was advised against every Frenchman, especially against the military ones: “It is of the greatest importance to have spies who may find out any information capable of bringing restlessness to the State, either by sea or by land”.(12)

Even those few Frenchmen who had lived for many years in Brazil were put in prison and questioned, as it was the case of one sent from Paraíba in 1809, married and living from his trade in this captaincy. He was kept in the fortress of Villegaignon until his innocence was proved. In some instances, the authorities preferred to send away to Europe innocent Frenchmen “to clean Brazil from this race”. (13)

D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho suspected even the black men from Martinique and asked the intendant to report on those who resided in Rio de Janeiro. In his answer Fernandes Viana reported that there were only four Martinicans living in the city: one was employed by the Ouvidoria Geral do Crime; another one was a barber and he also taught French being accepted in the homes of good families; a third was teaching fencing to the military; and the last one was a shoemaker and he lived poorly. No reason to think they were emissaries from Napoleon...(14)

Some measures were also taken against the Spaniards from Spanish America but it became very difficult for the intendant to find out the guilty ones. Trade relations between Rio de Janeiro and the Prata region were very common and frequent, and therefore the rumours and the news on Spanish America circulated very easily among the mercantile group. When Antonio Isla was put in prison in the island of the Cobras, the Spanish and the Portuguese who had trade negotiations in the River de la Plata became agitated and fearful, according to the Police intendant. (15) He thought D. Rodrigo’s suspicions on the Spaniards from la Plata to be somewhat exaggerated: “with

the constant trade we have with that region, there is no need to dispose of other means to know what is happening there, or for them to know what is happening here". (16)

In January 1811 a Spanish pilot was imprisoned and questioned, and he claimed to have a mercantile contract with John Curtis, and that he was supposed to leave for Buenos Aires the next day: "this impediment will bring him and that negotiation great damage". But D. Rodrigo insisted that he should be kept in prison in solitary because he had arisen many suspicions. In his answer to the secretary of State the intendant was certain of the pilot's innocence, having examined his papers and documents. He recalled: "Judicial trials can only take place with witnesses and documents, and in this case there are none". As D. Rodrigo had not revealed the grounds for being suspicious of this Spanish pilot, the intendant saw no reason to keep Curtis in prison. (17)

If Paulo Fernandes Viana was more lenient than the secretary of State towards Spanish sailors and other maritime people, in one instance he showed the same rigour. João Paulino da Mota Lagrita, born in Buenos Aires, was an apothecary in Rio de Janeiro and in 1811 was accused of maintaining dangerous correspondences with Montevideú. The intendant, however, thought he was more dangerous in his apothec, where he used to talk about the events in Buenos Aires, praising the "revolutionary spirit" that had sprung there. Viana wanted Lagrita expelled from Brazil. (18)

The anti-Napoleonic propaganda

When the booksellers of Rio de Janeiro imported anti-Napoleonic leaflets and books from Portugal, they thought they would sell them with profit because of the interest in the subject. As Kirsten Schultz found out, an 1810 shipment included 250 copies of *Coleção de escritos seletos publicados em Espanha depois da invasão aleivosa dos franceses, traduzidos em português*, and 250 copies of *Epístola em verso heróico, quintilhas, décimas, e sonetos, cujo assunto é a nação francesa*. (19) Most probably these anti-Napoleonic pamphlets were bought by the Portuguese exiles who wanted to be in touch with the events in Europe. When part of that literature was reprinted by the Brazilian Royal Press, we may think of some pressure exerted by members of the government such as D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho in order to undermine the traditional French cultural influence on the Brazilian elite.

Some stylistic characteristics can be detected in this anti-Napoleonic propaganda. Napoleon's name is preceded by some negative adjectives: atrocious, furious, infamous, ferocious. But these were weak forms of insulting the emperor. Antonomasia is the chosen stylistic process: the name disappears and a great variety of expressions is used: "empires destroying comet", "gallic colossus", "gallic dictator", "devious gallo", "bloodthirsty universal despot", "enemy of the humanity", "enemy of the human kind", "men's flagellator", "ruthless tyrant", "Corsican dragon", "barbarian dragon", "revolutionary monster", "monster from Corsica", "arrogant usurper", "infatuated soldier", "ferocious enemy of trade", "barbarian physiocrat", "cruel centaurus", "new Nero"... Imagination had no limits...

These expressions reveal a certain number of statements that the reader can easily detect: compared to enlightened monarchs Napoleon was a tyrant, a despot; compared to legitimate rulers he was an usurper; compared to policed Europeans a barbarian being a Corsican; compared to partisans of economic liberalism a physiocrat.

In these pamphlets his social origin and the bad behaviour of his family are underlined. Bonaparte came from the lowest classes of society; immorality was the main characteristic of his relatives, beginning with his mother, and the *Revolutionary Plutarch*, reprinted in Rio de Janeiro after a first edition in Lisbon, criticised his family.

Napoleon's social and political rise was obtained "by ruse, schemes and fraud", and even his military victories, so incensed by his partisans, were due to treasons and intrigues.

Printed by the Royal Press in Rio de Janeiro in 1809, the *Special recipe to make napoleons* gives us an adequate idea of this anti-Napoleonic literature.

Recipe

Take a handful of corrupted earth,
Five kilos of refined lies,
A barrel of sophisticated impiety,
Of audacity a well measured "canada";

The peacock's tail all opened,
With the bloody tiger's nail,
From the Corsican the heart, and the faked
Aged fox's head:

All this well cooked in a slow fire
Sweet, tender and mild in appearance
Bold ambition thrown in it, I pray

Let it become all mixed up
And then await very eagerly because soon
A Napoleon flies from there.

Even a moderate and scholarly author as José da Silva Lisboa, a political economist, tried in 1815 to diminish Napoleon's military prestige applauded by the "atheistic cabala". He presented Napoleon's empire as the result of "an heretic revolutionarism and a destructive despotism", not of a remarkable military or civil merit. Again in 1818 Silva Lisboa attacked Bonaparte and the Frenchmen, when he recalled that D. João and the royal family had escaped from the "paws of the Corsican tiger and his followers, children of a country demoralized and rich in monsters". The Corsican dynasty was the heir of the former revolutionaries who had preached irreligion and wanted to prevent legitimate trade. Napoleon was "the countryman from Ajaccio", the captain of a gang of murderers and thieves, who had put his relatives in European thrones and established blood relations with "the most honourable families and reigning Houses". (20)

Although the great majority of the anti-Napoleonic pamphlets was written in a popular language easily understood by the low classes in Portugal, who had strongly reacted against the invaders, the cultural environment in Rio de Janeiro was also easily receptive to more scholarly works of propaganda, even because the equivalent of European "people", that is to say, the freed black mass, was illiterate and far away from this propaganda literature. The Royal Press printed in 1811 some verses in French that were a panegyric of lord Wellington, the commander who had put obstacles "à la rage en fureur d'un vil people d'esclaves". Named "terreur des factieux", Wellington was encouraged to destroy his enemy Massena, "domestique d'un corse", "esclave d'un tyran". Compared to Fabius in Rome and to Scipio in Africa, Wellington is the hero in this short poem that could be read only by the Brazilian elite, not by the low classes of Rio de Janeiro.(21)

As to the satirical engravings that circulated in Portugal against Napoleon, we have no document proving their circulation in Brazil, not even in the major cities, Rio de Janeiro and Salvador. The only engravings advertised in the *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro* in 1811 were the departure of the prince regent and his family from Lisbon, by the well known engraver Bartolozzi; and the portraits of Fernando the 7th, lord Wellington, Palafox, the marquis de la Romana. The departure of the French by sea was the only exception. (22)

The role of the *Correio Brasiliense*

The short pamphlets were not alone in the creation and diffusion of Napoleon's black legend. More restrained in its language, the paper published in Portuguese in London by the freemason Hipólito da Costa, the *Correio Brasiliense*, contributed to the condemnation of the French political system and the exaltation of the British one. Beginning his task as editor in June, 1st, 1808, he explained that, being born in America (Sacramento Colony), he wished to enlighten the Americans on what was going on in Europe. He wanted to transmit to a "far away and peaceful" nation the events of that part of the world that "the confused ambition of men was leading to the most complete barbarism". (23)

Hipólito da Costa did not miss an opportunity of pointing out that the "Corsican despot" controlled the information given to the Frenchmen on the events in Europe. Napoleon limited the freedom of press in order to keep his subjects in an ignorance that was convenient to his party in power. Since the first issues of his paper Hipólito attacked those in Portugal who were "partidistas" (partisans) of the French. For instance the author of *Reflexões sobre o Correio Brasiliense*, book in which the Imperial University and others creations of the "new Tamerlão" were praised. (24) Precisely because of its position against the emperor of France the *Correio Brasiliense* was not prohibited in Brazil despite its defence of a free press and of the British political system. As the secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, explained to his brother, the Portuguese diplomatic representative in London, the prohibition would only occur if its editor wrote in such a way that he provoked seditions, or if he published calumnies.

The anti-Napoleonic position of Hipólito da Costa did not prevent his criticism of the pamphlets published in Portugal against the emperor of France. In one of them, printed in 1810, he criticised the fact that Napoleon's condemnation was followed by the defence of despotism in the Portuguese monarchy. He also showed that the author declaimed against the Jacobins "without telling the reader what he meant by this word". The poor quality of these pamphlets was not forgiven. He would like the attacks to Napoleon to be more intellectually constructed. (25)

At the same time that Hipólito da Costa criticised Napoleon and his government he revealed his support of a political reformism in Portugal instead of the French revolutionaries' dogmas. He analysed a pamphlet published in 1809, *Desengano proveitoso que um amigo da pátria se propõe dar a seus concidadãos*, whose author defended the French and praised their government and at the same time stated that the war was caused by the European interference in France's internal affairs. (26) Remembering Burke, Hipólito wrote that all sagacious men had guessed "the chaos in which the French with their revolution were going to impel Europe", and therefore the war against France was directed to the prevention of all evils that nation would bring to Europe.

The French had been so far victorious in the battles with other nations (England being an exception) and these victories were the result of the peoples' ignorance: they still believed that the cure to their infirmities would come from France, although their governments ordered the publication of books against the French wave. For instance, in Portugal a translation of Mallet du Pan was published. Only England resisted the French wave due to the freedom of the press and to the greater political culture of its people. The French seduction was lost on the British.

The author of *Desengano proveitoso* aimed to demonstrate that all misfortunes fallen upon the Portuguese had their origin in their British allies, who had always taken the gold from Brazil. The French emperor and king of Italy only proposed to restore the freedom of the seas that Great-Britain had usurped. His general Junot was in charge of the defence of the Portuguese ports against "the tyrannical influence of the British". The 40 thousand British soldiers sent to Portugal had the purpose of conquering the country, and therefore the best solution was submission to France: "Portugal, as a second order power, had to depend on some first order power. So, in the present political state of the globe, the supremacy of French empire is as bright as the light of the sun". At the end of the volume, Soult was the proposed king of Portugal.

It is true that the *Correio Brasiliense* intensely collaborated with the anti-Napoleonic propaganda, especially through commentaries to books and political events, but at the same time its editor praised the freedom of the press, inexistent in Portugal, and the English political system with two Chambers, when Portugal was an Old Regime monarchy.

A touchy issue: the slave trade

Coincidental with D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho as secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the publication of some anti-Napoleonic pamphlets in Rio de Janeiro sought the effect of undermining the intellectual French influence on the Brazilian elite and at the same time of convincing the Brazilians that the British were the best allies. The hostile reaction to the British began with the opening of the Brazilian ports in 1808 and deepened with the 1810 treaties, when the British plan on slave trade abolition was made public.

Even before the prince regent's departure from Portugal, the Portuguese diplomatic representative in London wrote to George Canning in May 1807 stating his thought on the matter: "the immediate suspension of the traffic would be the irrevocable ruin of the agriculture", meaning of course the Brazilian agriculture. (27) So in diplomatic circles slave trade abolition was already a subject of discussion, but it had not yet transpired to the public.

In Brazil that publicity was acquired with the signature of the 1810 treaties, and one of the prince regent's counselors, António de Araújo de Azevedo, did not agree with the promise of gradually abolishing the slave trade. He inquired in his memoir presented to the monarch: "What right has Great Britain to exclude Portuguese merchants from the "resgate" trade in territories that do not belong to the British?" Araújo de Azevedo also denounced the interest of the British in the suppression of Brazilian slave trade: their purpose was "to diminish the Brazilian coffee and sugar cultures" in order to favour their own. (28)

Hostility towards the British was stronger in Bahia where merchants suffered the seizure of their ships by the British Navy in 1812. These were apprehended in Mina Coast and taken to Serra Leoa, and the Bahian merchants lost 800 thousand cruzados, as they complained in a representation to the prince regent D. João.(29) When James Prior

disembarked in Salvador in 1813 he sensed the tensions in the city: “The slave apprehensions in the coast of Africa provoked a great antagonism against our country”. Having stayed in Rio de Janeiro before travelling to Bahia James Prior had already noticed that African slavery was one of the principal points against the British not only for the trading part of the people but also for every class. He wrote: “All other considerations give way to it. Portugal and Spain, England and France, Wellington and Bonaparte, and the Prince may all go headlong to the shades, provided their darling traffic – the subject of their waking and sleeping dreams – be but permitted to remain”. (30)

The paper *O Investigador Português*, published in London, made public the complaints of the mercantile corps of Bahia, and later these documents were translated into French and published in Paris in 1814, when the issue of the slave trade was being discussed in the Viena Congress. (31)

The Bahian merchants wanted to receive indemnities for their losses and the government in Rio de Janeiro advised the governor of Bahia, conde dos Arcos, to make public this possibility in order to maintain the good will between Bahian and British in the city. The local gazette, *Idade d’Ouro do Brasil*, published the “aviso” of June 14, 1813, that announced to those who had lost their ships that they should collect all the necessary documentation to be presented in London. (32)

Even the Bahian gazette, submitted to government censorship, criticized in 1814 the londoner “fashion” of discussing slave trade: “It is fashionable to write on this subject, and to discuss it in circles and coffee-houses”. The editor was most sceptical about the British “love of humanity” and doubted that this love caused all the ardour in the debate. In his opinion the enlightened Europe should think of exterminating the Algerian pirates instead of proposing the total extermination of slaves. (33)

The 1810 Treaty of Commerce

Two enlightened men in the prince regent’s entourage, D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, secretary of State, and António de Araújo de Azevedo, counselor in the Council of State, had opposed ideas on commercial liberalism. The latter argued in a memoir offered to D. João that he thought to be inconvenient to Portugal the adoption of Adam Smith’s principles in what commerce was concerned: “Which government has adopted the liberal principles of commerce stated by that author in the *Wealth of Nations*? Why has not Great Britain, for whom he particularly wrote, adopted them?” If the liberal principles exposed by Smith and Sismonde, and adopted by D. Rodrigo, now count of Linhares, were sound, why Great Britain did not apply them? (34)

If a real reciprocity was not agreed upon, the treaty of 1810 was going to ruin Portuguese manufactures and trade. While D. Rodrigo was proud of the text finally established, and was convinced time would do justice to this document, Araújo de Azevedo saw in it protectionism on the English side and liberalism only on the Portuguese side. The general reception to the treaty was one of doubt among the prince regent’s counselors who saw in it an excessive compliance to the British demands.

The criticism to the treaty can also be read in the *Correio Brasiliense*. For Hipólito da Costa the treaty was an attempt “to ruin Portuguese trade” and “to attack the sources of the nation’s opulence”. He could not accept it, as some did, “as the most elaborate political work of count of Linhares”, and he tended to underline its flaws, pointing out that even D. Rodrigo felt obliged to write a memoir in order to prove to the prince regent the excellencies of the treaty. This memoir was transcribed in the *Correio*

Brasiliense and Hipólito da Costa stresses in his criticism D. Rodrigo's lack of sincerity when he tries to demonstrate reciprocity in all paragraphs of the treaty. (35)

The admission of all British merchandises in Brazil was a point not negotiable during the preliminaries between lord Strangford and D. Rodrigo, and this forceful position from the British government had been accepted. But, as Hipólito da Costa points out, the most important Brazilian products as coffee and sugar were admissible in Great Britain only for re-exportation, "and so the reciprocity exists only in words", not in reality.

The two brothers Sousa Coutinho, D. Rodrigo, the secretary of State, and D. Domingos, the Portuguese diplomatic representative in London, were severely criticised by Hipólito da Costa. The count of Linhares was seen as a man who ignored political economy and commerce, and even so he had not consulted those who specialised in these matters when he was preparing the text of the treaty. D. Domingos was accused of having accepted the paragraph in which it was stated that only those ships built in Portugal were to be considered as Portuguese ships. As most of the 200 mercantile ships had been built abroad, and the Brazilian trade could not expand without them, this paragraph was against Portuguese interests.

Despite criticisms that came from everywhere, D. Rodrigo was convinced of the righteousness of his position in "Remarks in defence of the 1810 treaty of commerce", where he mentioned the "small crooked ideas" that still filled many heads on the exclusive privileges of national trade and on the protective rights in industry. "There are people who close their eyes to the sun light", he wrote. Brazil was happy with the liberal principles adopted by the prince regent and future experience would give him credit for this position. Some months before dieing in 1812, the count of Linhares stated with conviction: "I will never regret anything I have proposed and written on this matter". (36)

It is true that the 1810 treaty of commerce was more prejudicial to Portugal than to Brazil, where people were more sensitive to the clause in the treaty of alliance on the abolition of slave trade. It is understandable that a memoir written in 1817 by a Brazilian born anonymous author does not participate in the chorus of criticism in regard to the treaty of commerce. He wrote that the international situation explained the terms of the treaty. "Brazil without manufactures and Portugal in the impossibility of exporting its few manufactured products because of the enemy occupation", which attitude was the government of Rio de Janeiro supposed to take when the number of consumers had increased with the thousands of people arriving from Europe? For this "Brazilian Portuguese", as he called himself, the Portuguese merchants, instead of claiming against the treaty, should remember that Brazil, "for its prosperity", had to be freed from "mercantile slavery". (37)

Oliveira Lima, in his classic work *D. João no Brasil*, followed the opinion of Thomas Sumter, the American representative in Rio de Janeiro, when he reported in February 1811 that the 1810 treaty of commerce had been favourable to Brazil. Later, in May, Sumter completed this information writing that the Brazilian ports were flooded with British merchandises sold very cheap in wholesale. (38)

The two 1810 treaties with Great-Britain, the treaty of commerce and the treaty of alliance, had different impacts in Portugal and in Brazil because their interests were divergent. For Brazilian inhabitants the clause of abolition of slave trade was a crucial one, while for the Portuguese the clauses on commerce were the most prejudicial.

Summarizing, I would like to go back to my previous question: was it necessary in Brazil the anti-Napoleonic propaganda, not only with the Royal Press publications but

also with the importation of pamphlets by the book dealers in Rio de Janeiro and in Salvador? Was not instead Great Britain, with its commercial privileges and its merchants established in the two main Brazilian ports, the “bête noire” to be fought? Was not also the British government that proposed the more polemic measure and the more disagreeable one to the Brazil inhabitants, the abolition of slave trade?

Only recently Kirsten Schultz called our attention to the anti-British attitude that was perceived in Rio de Janeiro, especially after D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho’s death in 1812. As Strangford reported, the inhabitants of the new seat of the Portuguese court had come to view the British as “usurpers of their commerce”. (39) What I want to stress here is not only the hostility perceived in the mercantile group, but also the antagonism that came with the discussion of a sensible issue for all inhabitants.

Napoleon, the European war, the creation of the black legend of the emperor by the British, the Spaniards and the Portuguese alike, were not the primary concerns of Brazil’s inhabitants. They had their own agenda, and some of the prince’s counselors were shrewd enough to feel the difference between the interests of Portugal and those of Brazil. At the same time the presence of the monarch and its court differed for some years any projects of independence and most of all the project of a republican government. As James Prior remarked: “There is no question among those who best know the country, that, but for the timely arrival of the government, Brazil would have followed, if not preceded, the efforts of the Spanish colonies for independence”. (40) Not even a Constitution was asked for in Brazil as it was in Portugal during the Napoleonic period by a small fraction of the intellectual elite. Brazilians were happy enough with the presence of the royal family to think of a change in government.

Notes

- 1 – Silva, 1977, pp.215-224.
- 2 – Capela, 1993, p.86.
- 3 – Freitas, 1958, vol.1, cap.2.
- 4 – Ver o texto da carta régia em Cardoso, 2001, p.202.
- 5 – BNRJ, Mss. I – 31,28,26.
- 6 – BNRJ, Mss. II – 34,25,23.
- 7 – IEB, Lamego Collection, Cod.25, doc.9.
- 8 – ANRJ, Police Intendancy, Cod. 323, vol.1, fl.71.
- 9 – *Correio Brasiliense*, vol.1, p.341.
- 10 – *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p.564.
- 11 – Luís Gonçalves dos Santos, *Memórias para servir à História do Reino do Brasil...*, vol. 1, p.256.
- 13 – ANRJ, Police Intendancy, Cod.318, fl. 76v.
- 14 – ANRJ, Police Intendancy, Cod. 323, vol.1, fls. 15-16v; vol.3, fls. 60-60v.
- 15 – ANRJ, Police Intendancy, Cod. 318, vol.1, fls. 76-77.
- 16 – ANRJ, Police Intendancy, Cod. 318, vol.1, fls. 42-46 and 66-67.
- 17 – ANRJ, Police Intendancy, Cod. 318, vol.1, fls. 121-123.
- 18 – ANRJ, Police Intendancy, Cod.323, vol.2, fl.60; vol.3, fl. 7v.
- 19 – Schultz, 2001, p.90, note 28.
- 20 – ANRJ, Police Intendancy, Cod. 323, vol.3, fls.54, 63v-64, and 85.
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