

Politician priests and their solidarity networks: an analysis of the role of priests in the 'sertão' of Minas Gerais (1822 and 1831)

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RESUMO

A consolidação dos Estados nacionais modernos implicou combinações múltiplas entre mentalidade cristã e racionalismo secular. Apesar disso, as relações entre poder temporal e espiritual nem sempre foram congruentes e harmoniosas. Tampouco limitaram-se ao âmbito institucional. No caso brasileiro, muitos clérigos aliaram de modo peculiar a formação pastoral e intelectual à atuação política, em favor de seus interesses privados, buscando usufruir de suas redes de sociabilidade para resistir às normatizações encaminhadas pelo Estado nacional, desde 1822. Visando preservar ou mesmo galgar aqueles atributos garantidores de distinção, riqueza e poder e atuando, sobretudo, por vias informais, esses clérigos protagonizaram alguns dos conflitos ocorridos no sertão de Minas Gerais, os quais, conforme analisa o presente artigo, desafiaram a competência governamental em garantir a estrita observância da Lei, denunciando novas formas de fazer política, personificadas na figura do 'padre político'.

Palavras-chave: padre político; constitucionalismo; Minas Gerais.

ABSTRACT

The consolidation of modern national states involved multiple combinations of secular rationalism and Christian mentalities. Nevertheless, relations between temporal and spiritual powers were not always congruent and harmonious. Nor were they limited to institutional frameworks. In Brazil many clerics combined in a particular way pastoral and intellectual formation and political action in favor of their own interests, seeking benefits from their social networks to resist the rules enacted by the state since 1822. Aiming at preserving or even increasing attributes that were guarantors of distinction, wealth and power, and acting especially through informal channels, these clerics caused some of the conflicts which occurred in the Minas Gerais 'sertão,' which as this article examines, challenged government competence to ensure strict observance of the law.

Keywords: politician priests; constitutionalism; Minas Gerais.

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The European eighteenth century witnessed a reinterpretation of the nature of government which had profound repercussions on state structures. Based on new conceptions developed since the seventeenth century of the origins of “civil and political society, the pact or contract between the ruled and rulers, the nature of sovereignty, the most rational regime or political system, the liberties and rights inherent in citizenship,”¹ this phenomenon which had repercussions all over Western Europe and in the American colonies implied the progressive affirmation of temporal power over the spiritual, “as if this was affirmed in advance as the final critique of the organization of the terrestrial life of man.”² In this way, prefixing the ‘utility of the Republic’ to the ‘precepts of ethics,’ *secularization* appears as its essential mark, as an expression of the new form of liberty and autonomy, of ‘being in the world’ of modern man.³

However, the tendency in question does not imply a unison reply of philosophers to the question of religion, nor, the impossibility of coexistence between apparently irreconcilable elements, such as “faith and science, the philosophical tradition and rational and experimental innovation, theocentrism and anthropocentrism.”⁴ To the contrary, the Enlightenment movement involved a marked *eclecticism* in the philosophic plane,⁵ as well as guarding profound asymmetries between the historical circumstances which saw it born and between those who identified as ‘men of letters’ in the same cultural space.

As a result religion was at the foundations of the Catholic Enlightenment – characteristic of the Italian and Iberian states – and even in the countries which were the stage of modern democratic and liberal experiences,⁶ their ‘spokespersons’ were men linked to their civilizations and committed to the religious sphere of power.⁷ In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a symbiosis emerged between the old order and the consolidation of modern national states, implying multiple combinations between the *Christian mentality* and *secular rationalism*.

From this perspective the criticism of religion and the later separation between Church and State did not eliminate the active participation of the clergy in the ongoing process, nor did it result in the complete replacement of faith by reason, or of religion by nationalist ideology. There was thus no shortage of cases in which it was sought to constitute the nation as a community of believers using Christian symbols to sacralize them,⁸ or giving up the religious liturgy to commemorate the nation, a process in which the support provided by clergy for the national cause was fundamental.⁹ After all in a world structured by religion, the Church, through its representatives was the only power

with the effective capacity to assert itself over the broad sectors of society, from the “most humble, daily and immediate, such as families and communities, to the international sphere, in which it coexisted with the powers of kings and emperors.”¹⁰

In the construction processes of modern national states, however, the relations between *temporal* and *spiritual power* were not always congruent and harmonious. Nor were they limited to the institutional sphere. Many clerics allied in a peculiar manner *pastoral* and *intellectual activities* to *political activism*, seeking to use their sociability networks, the retinue of believers enveloped in the mystical aura of sacerdotal power, for their own interests, resisting the rules enacted by the state being constructed.

In the Brazilian case, although recent contributions have advanced the understanding of the participation of the ‘political clergy’ in the process of independence and the formation of the imperial state,¹¹ little emphasis has been given to the role of the priests who acted in non-institutional ways. Mixing with the laity and assuming alternative political projects, their forms of action did not fit into the ‘liberal’ or ‘conservative’ positions which polarized parliamentary discussion about the Church and religion in Brazil.¹²

In addition to active participation in the construction of new spaces of sociability – “political, patriotic, philanthropic and Masonic, public and secret”¹³ – which jointly with the representative spheres constituted a central dimension to the construction of public spaces in Brazil, priests acted through more even informal paths of power, adding values and codes of conduct parallel, and even averse, to the preparation of the constitutional order.

This profile of the Brazilian political clergy has been attributed in part to the precarious manner in which the Tridentine reform was conducted in Brazil,¹⁴ according to which the clergy had to stand apart from the laity, assuming an aura of purity and sanctity. To the contrary of this:

the priests of colonial Brazil were little different from their flocks in their daily lives. In addition to their involvement with questions of a temporal nature, it was not rare to see priests without their sacerdotal habit participating in profane festivities, entering into concubinage and raising children. This proximity of priests with the daily life of the population meant that they ended up sharing the same problems, demands and feelings as their believers. Consequently, priests became much more apt at assuming the role of spokespersons for the people, transforming themselves into potential popular leaders. (Souza, 2010, p.46)

Moreover, the education of the clergy active in the context of independence and the initial stages of the construction of the Brazilian national state was guided by “Pombaline Catholic regalism.”¹⁵ This, although far from resuming priestly activity in the “systematization” and “moralization of religious practices and representations,”¹⁶ attributed a civil dimension to it, mixing the functions of public man and priest. This education – which we will discuss in greater detail below – resulted in the wide-ranging public and civil insertion of the Brazilian clergy at the moment of the establishment of forms of political representation, when they gained new channels and comprehensiveness.

At the same time, the actions of these clerics was associated with violence and the indiscipline characteristic of the resistance of local potentates to the ongoing imposition of new rules, aiming to preserve, or even expand, those attributes which guaranteed distinction, wealth, and power, such as land, slaves and titles.

In this article a privileged focus is taken for the analysis of the actions of these clerics, at the moment when the national state carried out the first institutional adaptations necessary for the creation of the – material and symbolic – conditions of its existence. Specifically, I look at some of the political conflicts which occurred in areas of the Minas Gerais *sertão*, which illustrate the weight of disputes sponsored by local clerics.

Traditionally in a region “so vast, so deserted, so far”¹⁷ from the centers of political decision making, and most often the seats of bishops, the actions of these clerics took place in conditions of great power and autonomy, making them almost potentates who supported by the immediate representatives – generally relatives, *agregados* (sharecroppers), believers – not only interfered in the affairs of justice, but converted themselves into ‘another legislation,’ further complicating the picture painted by José de Sá Bettencourt Acióli in 1799:

almost all of the *sertão* which lies at the extremities of the captaincies of Bahia, Minas Gerais, Goias and Pernambuco suffers great inconveniences from the lack of administration of justice, due to the long roads and for the same reason: respect for royal authority in these places is very like the light, whose rays are weaker the greater the distance from the focus.¹⁸

In the context of independence and the implementation of modern political forms, these ‘representatives of the laws of God,’ feeling their personal and institutional power questioned by constitutionalism, wove alliances and voiced political practices, nuanced not by questions of a religious nature, but

by concepts of power related to a singular regional trajectory, values and political practices which, in the conception of the judges and magistrates based in those regions, were associated with the risks of ‘anarchy’ and ‘despotism’, extremes averse to the moderate liberal cause.

In the following reflections we have sought to situate some of these conflicts caused by clerics in the Minas *sertão*, which give density to a process which was clashing with an essential competence of public administration: the strict observance of the law. Without ignoring the fact that the resistance and jurisdictional conflict in this process of qualitative transformations in conceptions of representation, sovereignty, and the foundations of the Monarchy, came from the judicial and civil authorities in the provinces, we are interested in the emergence of new forms of politics, personified in the figure of the ‘political priest’.

THE EDUCATION OF ENLIGHTENED LUSO-BRAZILIAN CLERGY AND ITS POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS

For the Luso-Brazilian case, the association between *spiritual* and *temporal* power resides in the concession that the popes made to the Portuguese and Spanish monarch of the ‘*padroado*’ (patronage): the right to administer ecclesiastic business aimed at “expanding the faith and the empire.”¹⁹ This concession, however, did not express a monolithic trajectory towards secularization, since the *padroado* represented the force of the Catholic Luso-Brazilian mentality – its cultural base and the foundations of the legitimacy of any form of government²⁰ –, which unfolded in the secular action of the Church in Brazil, making the religious and political spheres, the sacred and profane, practically inseparable.

This connection between religious practice and politics took specific form whilst the Marquis de Pombal was prime minister of King José I (1750-1777). Historically associated with enlightened Portuguese reformism, the government of Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo inaugurated a policy known as *regalism*, aiming to place the Church under the wardship of the state, nationalizing it and making its members ‘public servants.’²¹

As in Portugal, the Jesuits exercised an ideological monopoly which had lasted centuries²² – through a conception of teaching based on *Ratio Studiorum* (plan of study), which drew on classical humanism from the second scholasticism –, and resulted in a set of policies fundamentally conceived through the

binomial *Reformism-Pedagogy*. Identifying the *cultural backwardness* of the kingdom as the principal obstacle to be overcome in the process of inverting its *economic decadence*, a particular type of *pedagogical concern* was derived from it, based on the central critique of the Jesuits: *the question of teaching method* based on the ‘prevalence of the peripatetic philosophy;’ in the ‘neglect of the study of Greek and Latin;’ the ‘disordered content taught in university subjects;’ the ‘lack of subsidiary disciplines and in the fragmentation of knowledge,’ as well as in the ‘absence of eclecticism.’²³

In the *Compêndio Histórico do Estado da Universidade*, prepared by the *Junta de Providência Literária* (Board of Literary Providence), created on 23 December 1770 with the aim of examining the state of the University of Coimbra and to serve as the foundations for the writing of its *New Statutes*, these reflections were systematized, unraveling a methodology in harmony with that advocated by the Enlightenment. Analyzing the means through which the Jesuits took possession of the University, they complained about the lack of *practical* guidance for students, suffocated by the use of speculative procedures and reasoning, inhibitors both of *erudition* – requisite for the interpretation of old texts – and *experimentation*, and thus of the empiricism of the Enlightenment, concluding with the impossibility of using any of the old *Statutes*, in force since 1598, “nothing ... for the purpose of reform.”²⁴

In the recently reformed university regalist and Galican-Jansenist²⁵ ideas rapidly spread, notably in the courses of Law and Theology, in which *Jusnaturalismo* (natural law theory) typical of the school of natural law and of people was adopted. Roman law thus lost its character of absolute and homogeneous truth, also being transformed into a historic product, with the eternal being distinguished from the contingent. What was being sought was the secularization of Portuguese political thought, through the negation of the primacy of theological truths over canon law and of canon law over civil, a primacy until then present in Jesuit education.

In this process, while on the one hand the ‘natural order’ was not questioned – because it was prescribed by God and revealed through the authority of the Church –, on the other it became intelligible to the extent that it was interpreted in light of history, both the sacred and profane, reducing its character as an absolute truth. Though *historicization*, it was possible to find arguments for renewed politico-religious attitudes.

In both the metropole and the colony – where the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1759 left the teaching system destructured, introducing the regalist classes – ecclesiastics continued to be active in the progress of the Pombaline re-

forms.²⁶ With this there emerged an essentially Catholic enlightenment, led by ‘enlightened’ men from within the Church²⁷ who, far from making it available to the regalist objectives of the state, preserved the liturgical vision of the world in which the set of beliefs and religious values was understood as indispensable to the conservation of society.

The reforms carried out in the University of Coimbra marked the intellectual education of a large part of the Luso-Brazilian statesmen who, especially those who studied law and theology between 1780 and 1790,²⁸ were involved in the implementation of the Enlightenment reforms designed for the state and the *Ultramar* (overseas) and after 1820, in the process of the independence and consolidation of the Brazilian national state. Molded according to the reformist optic of the ideal profile for the public man necessary to carry out the reforms and to overcome the economic and intellectual backwardness of the Kingdom, these statesmen received an education based on the “rational study methods,” capable of educating men who were simultaneously “useful for the Republic and Religion.”²⁹

Although not all the clerics who were involved in the phase of Brazilian national construction had obtained a university education, and even though only a small percentage had frequented the University of Coimbra – target of the Pombaline teaching reforms –, it is licit to extend the profile of the formal orientation received there to the body of priests in a general manner, a phenomenon attributed to the fact that other educational establishments in Brazil – starting with Olinda Seminary, created in 1800³⁰ – as well as the extra-scholastic spaces of sociability frequented by clerics,³¹ tended to adopt the model of ecclesiastic education propagated by Pombal.

From this landmark in the education of Brazilian clergy there emerged the figure of the ‘political priest,’ who associated in a very peculiar manner *pastoral* and *intellectual activities* with his activities as a *public man*. An education which, although not exclusively confined to seminaries,³² made them more vulnerable to involvement with mundane memories, as well as contributing to the sedimentation of a type of contempt for the institutions themselves as a primordial space for sacerdotal education (Souza, 2010, p.194).

This profile was related to the various complaints and accusations by provincial authorities at the moment of the affirmation of constitutionalism in Brazil, when the supposedly ‘disorderly’ action of these clerics involved in local networks of solidarity and leaders of private retinues made them similar to local potentates, appearing with alternative political projects to those of the central power.³³

It should be clarified here in relation to this apparently contradictory behavior of clerics, that the implementation of constitutional political structures reinforced their traditional 'civil-religious action'.³⁴ The independent Brazilian state could not dispense with the administrative and bureaucratic structure long since organized by Church, it had to use the latter's documentary and information control system for the local population, as well as its infrastructure of personnel and buildings. As Françoise de Souza has stated:

the best example of this phenomenon can be seen in the dependence that the state in the initial period of its formation had on priests to carry out elections. By doing this it encouraged the involvement of priests in the electoral process, naturalizing even more the association between religious practice and political practice, as well as providing the men of the Church with instruments to control and manipulate elections. (Souza, 2010, p.47)

Simultaneous to the availability of documentation, space and bureaucratic personnel in the organization of elections and the progress of electoral processes, the Brazilian clergy also revealed its electoral performance in a direct manner, occupying various spaces of public power, including the Brazilian parliament.

However, despite the breaches opened by constitutionalism, for the clergy to be able to continue not just exercising traditional lay functions, but ascending into new spheres of political representation, there hovered over its representatives – as well as over the rest of the civic authorities of the various provinces – a great legal confusion about the specific attributions of civic and ecclesiastic positions, aggravated by the lack of knowledge of the ones that existed.

Moreover, although the new lay attributes conferred on clerics configured a structuring dimension of the efforts to internalize the dominion of decisions and laws, captained by the central power, it involved men who through the trajectory of their education would not flee from the stigma most commonly applied to the laity: the development of ties with their respective locations, redounding in favoritisms in the disputes they arbitrated, as well as the infiltration of private questions in bureaucratic affairs.

This scenario minimized the possibilities of a rational administration, hindering the predictability of order, allowing a form of conduct for the laity and clerics which reinforced, in various dimensions, its autonomous nature in

relation to both religious precepts and the power of the imperial state, causing a type of ‘competitive cooperation’³⁵ between these authorities.

In the rest of the article we will try to map out some of the patterns of social insertion recurrent among clerics based in the areas furthest from the seat of provincial power in Minas, which tore a form of action reproduced at the expense of, and often through, the law itself.

POLITICAL PRIESTS AND THEIR SOLIDARITY NETWORKS: BETWEEN ‘DESPOTISM’ AND ‘DEMAGOGUERY’

In the perquisition of the tangible aspects which permeated the mounting of a public space in nineteenth century Minas, the logic of ‘not knowing subordination’ was presented as a characteristic mark of the actions of clerics, magistrates and other authorities based in the regions furthest from the seats of provincial power, configuring a profile of “disorder that must exist in a body without a head.”³⁶

In the circumstances analyzed by us, the actions of these authorities – lay and religious – was most notable in the *Comarca* (district) of Paracatu, situated in the northwest of Minas. Unlike the material conquests which favored landholders in the center and south of the province,³⁷ in Paracatu the traditional impermeability towards the law was loosened, a characteristic that could be associated with its *geographic distance* from the political and administrative center of the province – until 1815 it was still subordinated to the *ouvidoria* of Rio das Velhas, based in Sabará –, or the role played there by the *powerful landholders*, with wide-ranging and relatively autonomous political power, enrooted through the ties of kinship and clientelist networks, and consolidated during process of settling the region.³⁸

An autonomy which favors many types of iniquities and even reproduces itself in the body of ministers charged with applying the law, and affecting the recurrent disputes for spaces of power between magistrates, judges and local power.³⁹ In correspondence issued by the provisional government of Minas Gerais in 1823, the cause of these conflicts was still imputed to the administration of the *Comarca* of Paracatu, consisting of people little “apt for governance and almost none unconnected to ties of kinship and affections.”⁴⁰

In relation to ecclesiastic power, the situation was even more complicated. This was because the parish priests sent to those *sertões* put themselves from the very beginning under the protection of the power landholders, enlarging

their retinues,⁴¹ the ecclesiastic government based there was submitted until 1676 to the only bishopric in Brazil – that of Salvador – and from that year onwards, with the elevation of the prelacies of Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco to dioceses, it was subordinated to the Archbishop of the latter captaincy.

All of the Paracatu region became part of the diocese de Olinda⁴² – whose boundaries extended along the São Francisco river, covering its left bank, the territory of Minas and Goiás – where in the first half of the eighteenth century the figure of the ‘despotic and absolute’ priest Mendes Santiago stands out. On 9 April 1738, the king signed an arrest warrant for him, accusing him of causing “serious disturbances in São Romão.”⁴³ The warrant was not enforced, as the accused had crossed the frontier to the right bank of the São Francisco, starting to act as a ‘self-employed vicar’ in Paracatu, carrying out baptisms, as well as acting as a trader, rancher, cattle breeder, owner of a sugar mill and a cassava mill, as well as breaking the law, and taking possession of goods belonging to the crown – the mineral wealth of Córrego Rico – and charging expensively for his professional duties.

The example of Fr. Santiago was followed by others, characterizing the profile of a clergy formed of men who were “violent, political and quarrelsome” (ibidem, p.198-201), who, until the advent of the Empire, had exercised great influence on local political life. According to the diagnosis of the French naturalist and traveler Auguste de Saint-Hilaire, who passed through the region at the beginning of the nineteenth century, to a great extent the problem was due to the distance from the seat of the bishopric, implying that “no vigilance can be exercised over the clergy in this part of Brazil.”⁴⁴

He commented that the “priests could follow with impunity the examples of the laity who surrounded them and their conduct could not have an impact on the latter.” In the words of another contemporary traveler– Emanuel Pohl – the clergy was ‘numerous,’ and were ‘exclusively from the city,’ who possessed ‘much land’ and who were concerned with ‘economic activities.’⁴⁵

In the *vila* (town) of Paracatu, the weight of political disputes sponsored by the local clergy was present from the moment of the formation of the provisional government, due to the opposition of Vicar Forâneo Joaquim de Mello Franco – who had held the position of *ouvidor* of the Comarca since 1812 – to new holder of this position, the recently invested Coronel Antonio Baptista da Costa Pinto, who had to overcome a series of political difficulties, due to the great influence of his predecessor who became, according to the Coronel, the main political influence in the area.⁴⁶ When he refused to award the Vicar’s nephew, Francisco Antonio de Assis, the title of *Cavalleiro*, the priest led a

rising of the people against the acting *Ouvidor* intending to depose him and proclaim a provisional autonomy.

This was reported in the correspondence from the *ouvidor* of the *Comarca* – then taking refuge in his ranch – to the provisional government, in which he denounced that he found “the people restless and the Magistrates prevented from enacting Justice freely, and all caused by a rebellious man, who has raised himself as a Despot and who intends to be the judge of all,” not recognizing any “Superior, deeming that everything is permitted to him.”⁴⁷

According to the coronel, the authoritarianism of Antonio de Assis had been shown during the election of the provisional government for Minas when he sought

with all efforts as soon as the Parochial Electors arrived, to make their spirits nervous and to move them to unite to create in this Vila a Provisional Government, in which project he would be the President, and who, with all his seductions and private invitations made to some Officers of the Militia, was causing a great revolution which fortunately was interrupted by the lack of union.

Nonetheless, the document continues, even after the provisional government took power and the notice of this had reached the vila of Paracatu,

that restless man still dared to invite the Electors, Lieutenant José Luiz da Costa Araújo Arios ... and the Ensigns José Carneiro, José Lopes, and Fr. Miguel de Mello Chaves and Captain João Pereira da Costa ... for the new Revolution and the Creation of a new Government independent of the legitimate one ...

While in this episode the nephew of the vicar from outside, Francisco de Assis, saw himself favored by the widespread influence of his uncle, a short while later, when he already held the position of judge, he was overlooked in the indication of his successor, due to the influence of another cleric from the *Comarca*: Rev. Manoel Carneiro de Mendonça, twin brother of the father-in-law of the then *ouvidor* of the *Comarca*, Antônio Limpo Paulino de Abreu.

According to Francisco de Assis, when the *ouvidor* found it necessary to absent himself to take up the position of deputy in the Legislative Assembly, he had to appoint his successor to the position, and ignored the right of the ‘preference of the oldest,’ appointing Rev. Manoel Carneiro de Mendonça to the detriment of Francisco de Assis, “due to the relations of affinity and intimacy, with which he was linked to the Reverend.”⁴⁸

Dissatisfied with this, Antônio de Assis came to cause disorder in the Vila, defying the interim *ouvidor*– Manoel Carneiro de Mendonça – and stating that he did not recognize his jurisdiction, inflaming the people and the other members of the *Câmara* (municipal council) against him, as well as disrespecting other authorities, as registered in an official letter sent by the interim *ouvidor* to the president of the province.⁴⁹ He accused Judge Francisco Antônio de Assis of having “preference because he was, although the youngest in age, the longest in the position, and because he had some intelligence of the Law, and the *Chicanos* (acquired solely through the concourse of its frequent demands).” For this he drew on “art. 179 of Title 8º of the Imperial Constitution no. §14” which declared that “Any Citizen can be admitted to public, civic and military position, without any difference other than their talents and virtues.”

However, the interim *ouvidor* stated that this “his strongest support did not breach the existing Laws, nor give him any preference” and “finally the simple complaint, and representation made to the Superiors, was not enough for him to carry out the business in question, to protect compliance with the law, suspend the march of Justice and leave a *Comarca* without an *Ouvidor*” (idem, fl. 3). Reporting other conflicts involving Francisco de Assis, he concluded that “these reasons, which reach any limited spirit, do not loom before the eyes of a man who only listens to the voice of his own love, and to the vanity of preceding.”

Described in these terms, the movement that occurred in Paracatu suggests the weight of the disputes sponsored by local potentates in the political game of independence, a dimension still little explored by the historiography, and which will certainly result in more objective readings of the institutional and cultural relations between religion and politics in its regional extraction. On these occasions, the representative of spiritual power seeks not only to take advantage of the new spaces of political representation – disputing important positions –, as well as encouraging a simultaneous and skillful instrumentalization of modern and archaic political practices and values, denouncing the prevalence of a *modus vivendi* that was still *Ancien Regime*. After all, as Rev. Manoel Carneiro de Mendonça stated, the Constitution did not derogate ‘the existing Laws.’

In the documentation researched there appear various other reports of conflicts of jurisdiction and public disorders captained by clerics. Thus, in an official letter addressed to the Presidency of the Province, dated 20 March 1824, the interim *ouvidor* of Paracatu, Miguel Alves de Sousa, defended himself for the accusation made against him by his successor, who had been co-opted

by the ‘fearful party’ who always sought to ‘contrast him’ with the “scoundrels responsible for this conspiracy ... Fr. João Gaspar Esteves Rodrigues, his friend Joaquim Pimentel Barbosa ... and their retinues from the two families, Baptistas and Portelas, who are their followers,” as well as their “Agents, in Salgado, Captain Serrão, and S. Romão the said former judge João Pereira, and Vicar Manoel Caetano de Moraes Cabalão”, who “seduce parties against me.”⁵⁰

According to the *ouvidor*, “there is not one of those who have served in the court who had not stayed with Slaves or the goods of Absentees, and I wish it were for their fair prices in the market.” As an example of these infractions, he cites

Fr. João Gaspar [who] being the Prosecutor stayed with a mulatto called Adão from the goods collected from a Manoel da Costa Oeiras from Fazenda das Vazantes ... Joaquim Pimentel [who] being the Clerk of the Court, as well as having received from a Eliziário de something ... a female slave with the name Maria to comply with a tax collection... [all this, according to him] carried out by the aforementioned vicar of the *Vara* (District) and by his friends ... (idem, fl. 2v)

In other cases, these vicars, “with a cheating genius, and with little friendship for the Popular Authorities” simply ended up refusing to provide spiritual services to the local populations, preferring to private business, as mentioned in the *Ofício* (letter) from the Justice of the Peace of the District of São Gonçalo and Milho Verde, Jerônimo Júlio Baracho Brasileiro, who on 10 December 1831 notified the provincial government about the complaints of the inhabitants

from the district of S. Gonçalo do Rio das Pedras ... who found themselves in this *Arraial* (settlement) with the church closed, without them being able to fulfill the precepts of the Church because the curate of the chapel is an insolent and immoral man, an affect of the Religion who only seeks to encourage among his flock intrigue and with his arbitrary power to oppress and embarrass the Peoples, stopping to celebrate Mass in this chapel and denying the keys of the church to the other priest existing in his place so that no mass will be said to the people ... such behavior has never been seen.⁵¹

In an annexed document there are other complaints against the “omission of the priest to minister sacraments and to celebrate mass,” having let a slave of a local landholder died “without salvation,” by denying him extreme unc-

tion, or also “having received alms to say Mass, the curate... did not do this,” having gone “to a private property” (idem, fls. 8v-9).

The complex interweaving of the social networks woven by those charged with “implementing the Laws of God,” as well as their involvement with private business, appears in various other official letters sent by the court and other authorities of the Comarca of Paracatu, extending to the most northern districts of the Comarca of Serro, equally far from the Bishoprics of Mariana and Rio de Janeiro and where for a long time the clergy had been involved in political questions.⁵²

Thus, in an official letter from the Justice of the Peace of the District of São Romão, Joaquim José dos Santos, to the Presidency of the Province on 12 April 1827, the former denounced the tumults which “occurred on 6 and 7 April 1827, organized by the parish priest of the *freguesia*,” in which there “was found the participation of soldiers, bribed by the parish priest.” Although the document did not clarify the purposes of this uprising, the following occurred:

Captain S. M., commander of 7th Company, was contacted by the parish priest, and interested in the 200\$ rs promised him, he notified in person the soldiers of his company, Ângelo Custódio, José Carlos, Leandro Petracho and others to present themselves on 7 April ready for the uprising, which was set for the said day at eight in the morning, in the house of the parish priest, from where they were to leave. The aforementioned soldiers were unwilling and did not turn up, for which reason the aforementioned commander appeared alone at the time set.⁵³

The co-opting of military officers by clerics and local potentates in breach of public order and the insubordination of the people was not a novelty, being incorporated in the traditional social insertion of these segments, always involved in excesses committed during diligences and in other abuses, “a reflection of the increasing militarization of the captaincy during the eighteenth century.”⁵⁴ Used to great autonomy and the respect and distinction conferred by military rank and the carrying of arms, these officers refused to submit to the authorities charged with enforcing the law, according to the denunciation of the Justice of the Peace of Brejo do Salgado, in an official letter to the Presidency of the Province dated 12 November 1828, according to which “the militia attached to their privilege did not want to be called by the police inspectors and when there is disobedience to be brought before ... these officials in accordance with the law.”⁵⁵

In the documentation researched, no disorder perpetrated by the joint interests of clerics and military officers seems to have assumed the proportions of the incident that occurred in the *Lavra* (mining settlement) called Independência, located in Descoberto do Ourussu, in Serro *Comarca*, which had been embargoed by the state. Here, according to Joaquim de Carvalho – a police inspector, or *oficial de Quarteirão*, in S. Miguel e Almas, and Justice of the Peace according to the law –, “being charged by the meritorious *Ouvidor* and internal superintendent to maintain good order and to preserve” the said *lavra*,

being made fully aware that *Furriel* Januário Ferreira dos Santos, Commander of the Detachment stationed there to prevent theft on the National day, with the convenience of others working there in a mine whose shaft was under land already embargoed, and because it was his duty to report to the Superintendent the malpractice of this Employee, he did this and he was ordered by this Magistrate to go to the place and stop the work of the said *Furriel*, and his partners.

Having done this, “this *Furriel* who was a despot by nature went to the place where the” justice of the peace lived and “in uniform arrested him ... bringing him to the Barracks.” However, “not satisfied with the this, the *Furriel* in a similar outrage went to the place embargoed by the order of the Superintendent and by the Supplicant executed in his position as Justice of the Peace, deemed this embargo to be of no effect, and took the possessions of the goods,” “in which act he robbed the work of the company.”⁵⁶

In a petition sent by the people of the district of São Miguel e Almas to the president of the province, it was also alleged that the Rev. Luis José Ferreira took part in this, and “digging in embargoed mountains a mine with 20 and something *flights*” conspired, together with the above mentioned *Furriel*, against the national interests. According to the supplication of the Justice of the Peace “the necessary measures had to be taken so that this Jesuit, and his hunchback colleague called *Furriel* Januário Ferreira Carvalho, could not feed on the treasure of others, especially that of the Nation.”⁵⁷

In the eyes of these provincial authorities, no aspect in these conflicts was more alarming than the fact that the political alliances and conclaves enacted by local powers worked in a vertical sense, mobilizing what were designated as the ‘little classes,’ the ‘crude people,’ the ‘plebian anarchy,’⁵⁸ expressions which allude to the “infinite tramps, white men, those of mixed race, *pardos* (colored), *cabras* (literally goats – mestizos of undefined origin) and *crioulos forros* (liberated Creole slaves),”⁵⁹ frequently linked to the slavery of the province.

From the perspective of the groups which wove cohesion around the moderate liberal project, the always latent threat of insurrection from these social groups was tied to the action of the supposed “enemies of the Sacred cause of Brazil,”⁶⁰ represented by any tendency rival to the one they had chosen: guaranteeing ‘the just equilibrium’ between the extremes of ‘Demagoguery’ and ‘Absolutism.’⁶¹

It was in these terms that during the First Kingdom, these ‘disorderly priests’ personified the ‘risk of revolution’ imputed by provincial authorities to the *demagoguery* “which was characteristic of people who proclaimed themselves defenders of the ‘people’ for their own benefit,” using for this means contrary to the Constitutional System and which for this reason were associated with *despotism/absolutism*, real ‘political slavery.’⁶²

In the context of the First Kingdom – and especially after 7 April –, the actions of these clerics were politicized, being identified as the party of the ‘Restoration.’ This is the cause of the concern registered in the official letter sent by the interim circuit court judge of Vila do Príncipe, João Nepomuceno de Almeida, about the need for the Enlightenment of peoples as a way to bar the proliferation of ‘subversive principles.’ Agreeing that “the first duty of rulers is to make the possible efforts to enlighten the popular masses – since with enlightenment domestic and public virtues come, and as a consequence there is happiness, which is the aim of all association,” – he recommended that in addition to “establishing public schools, permitting and protecting Freedom of the Press, and the duty of avoiding cautiously anything that can contribute to the intellectual backwardness and the stultification of the people,” the established government should “blunt the instruments of barbarity which the enemies of civilization and of Liberty have resorted to.”⁶³

According to the circuit court judge it was these “emissaries of the bishop, and perhaps the former Emperor” – since the letter is from December 1831 – who had departed for the countryside “to preach subversive principles against the entire social order which sustained them, that the citizen should be indifferent to the public cause, blindly obeying the authorities and other similar absurdities,” as the “decanted Missionaries of Caraça” proceeded. In their missions the latter were making the “populace an instrument for vengeance, who respired and promised the now stunted but still not extinct servile party,” creating “even more dire intestinal dissent than those of the other Provinces,” because it was corroborated “by Religious fanaticism.”

The accusation of the judge was repeated in another official letter sent by the interim *ouvidor* of Serro, José Ferreira Carneiro, alarmed with the coming

of the priests in question to Vila do Príncipe to “preach anarchy,” as it was a strategy of these “enemies of the current system,” who “have looked for the link of religion to unite them to villainy.”⁶⁴

In no other location in Minas, however, did the subversion of the ‘small classes,’ sponsored by clerics, assume the proportions of the movement that occurred in São João Del Rei in the middle of 1831, which culminated in the well known Carrancas slave revolt.⁶⁵ From there the substitute Justice of the Peace, Domingos Teodoro de Azevedo, reported that “one Francisco, a mixed race slave of Joaquim de Sousa Paes, has publically stated that the Vicar of this *Freguesia*, Joaquim José Lobo, had solicited him to make the slaves of this *Freguesia* revolt, insinuating to them the means by which this could be done.” Carrying out an investigation with witnesses the judge proved the reports, having found “under the bed [of his master] a slave of Fr. Joaquim Leonel de Paiva at 10 at night, this slave having been arrested and interrogated confessed that he intended to kill his master and join the slaves from other plantations in doing the same and to go afterwards to Rio de Janeiro, and there to formulate better the insinuation of the Rev. Vicar Joaquim José Lobo”.⁶⁶

Despite being named as “the head of this insurrection,” the cleric – who according to the justice of peace “is not gifted with those qualities appropriate for a true Pastor who should only look after the spiritual pasture of his sheep” – appears to have betrayed his supposed rebels, causing the revolt of the slaves who “shouted in the streets that the Vicar had betrayed them,” in the middle of this disturbance he was arrested, as well as the above mentioned slave, his ally.

The progress of the resulting lawsuit highlighted the limits of the law in dealing with a social framework with such complexity. Thus, despite the seriousness of the events, the Circuit Court Judge for the Vila – Francisco de Paula Monteiro de Barros – judged in another official letter sent to the Presidency of the Province that there was not enough evidence in relation to the ‘plans for insurrection’ drafted in Arraial de Carrancas, sending for judgment only the case of the “intended murder against the life of the Rev. Joaquim Leonel de Paiva by this slave,” a crime which – according to the conclusion obtained from the interviewing of nine witnesses –, “was insinuated by the slaves of Lieutenant Francisco Machado Azevedo, father of the Justice of the Peace; to whom the same would have been done after the death of Fr. Leonel, and that at the end of all this they would all have been freed.”⁶⁷

However, due to the involvement of the Justice of the Peace in the lawsuit, the circuit court judge argued that he could not “carry out the *Devassa* (investigation) with the papers that had been sent to him, nor carry out the indirect

corpus delicti, without first the judgment of the Justice of the Peace being overturned,” an incumbency which was not part of the attributes of the criminal judge, since in addition to the fact that the “Law of 6 June of this year” does not declare “that these could judge, even less in a summary form, or sentence the Defendants, except in the crimes of the Police,” and that among these “the crime of insurrection was not classified in the New Criminal Code.” Moreover, he noted that of the nine witnesses interviewed by the justice of the peace, six were slaves, which annulled the power of the evidence, since “Slaves are excluded by law from being witnesses and can only be admitted to give testimony, at the exaction of this law, about domestic facts and when otherwise the truth cannot be known” (*idem*, fls. 2-2v).

Thus, “due to the omission in our Laws in relation to this case,” the circuit court judge justified, and despite “wanting to proceed with all prudence and circumspection in relation to this; with the crime being very serious when it was real and existed,” he stated that he had acted in “accordance with legal knowledge,” ordering “the two prisoners to be released... without the slightest fear of having infringed any Law” (*idem*, fl. 3v).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

From the beginning of colonization the Church carried out ‘civil-religious action,’ which made it a link between the state apparatus and the subjects (believers), later citizens. At the moment of the implementation of constitutional political forms in Brazil, it accumulated new functions, acting in the building of new public spaces under the inspiration of the liberal ideal, as well as functioning, in a systematic and institutional form, as the center of electoral registers and elections themselves.

This simultaneously religious and lay insertion opened breaches for the Brazilian political clergy to mold the process of the construction of spheres of constitutional power at both a national and provincial level. In addition to the skillful manipulation of the law and to the attributes of distinction conferred by the positions, there were priests who resisted the ongoing regulation through more informal ways, as this article has sought to demonstrate.

Above all, in the areas most distant from the seats of temporal and ecclesiastic power, these clerics had their actions politicized, converting themselves into a powerful link between dimensions which at that moment were undergoing profound transformations and re-articulations: *Brazilian society* in formation and the *state apparatus*; *regional impulses* and *imperial political centraliza-*

tion; the delimitation of spheres of jurisprudence between the *political* and *religious* power; the sedimentation of an *national* identity coexisting with references of an intended *universal* nature.

In this process, although it does not configure a uniform posture – fruit of the diversified liberal formation and of strikingly regional interests – these priests used to commanding and a typically *Ancien Regime* form of politics resisted the ongoing institutional adjustments, adding clientelist networks, codes of conducts and various references of cohesive power, capable of imposing limits on the process of transforming the administration into an active and rational instrument suitable of preserving order and maintaining the social equilibrium.⁶⁸

Motivated by temporal questions, but also by the preservation and successive re-signification of religious identity, the actions of these clerics loosened other facets of the secular action of the Church in Brazil, allowing it a more objective reading of the institutional and cultural relations between religion and politics, which conferred complexity on the process of the formation of the state and the Brazilian nation. This article, thus, aims to stimulate reflection which, broken down into a dual dimension – *historical* and *historiographical* – can contribute to the consolidation of a less reductionist reading of what royal patronage was in the first half of the nineteenth century.

NOTES

¹ FALCON, Francisco J. C. Da Ilustração à Revolução – percursos ao longo do espaço-tempo setecentista. *Acervo*, Revista do Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, v.4, n.1, jan.-jun. 1989. p.55.

² DOMINGUES, Francisco Contente. *Ilustração e catolicismo. Teodoro de Almeida*. Lisboa: Colibri, s.d. p.90.

³ PEREIRA, Miguel Baptista. *Modernidade e secularização*. Coimbra: Almedina, 1990. p.7.

⁴ FALCON, Francisco José C. *A época pombalina* (Política Econômica e Monarquia Ilustrada). 2.ed. São Paulo: Ática, 1993. p.430-431.

⁵ SILVA, Ana Rosa Clochet da. Ilustração, história e ecletismo: considerações sobre a forma eclética de se aprender com a história no século XVIII. *História da historiografia*, Ouro Preto: Ufop, n.4, p.75-87, mar. 2010.

⁶ ISRAEL, Jonathan. *Iluminismo radical: a filosofia e a construção da modernidade 1650-1750*. São Paulo: Madras, 2009.

⁷ VOVELLE, Michel (Dir.) *O homem do Iluminismo*. Lisboa: Presença, 1997.

⁸ LENHARO, Alcir. *A sacralização da política*. São Paulo: Papyrus, 1986. p.18.

⁹ HAUPT, Heinz-Gerherd. Religião e nação na Europa no século XIX: algumas notas comparativas. *Estudos Avançados*, São Paulo, v.22, n.62, p.77-94, 2008. Available at: www.scielo.br.

¹⁰ SOUZA, Françoise Jean de Oliveira. Do altar à tribuna: os Padres Políticos na formação do Estado nacional brasileiro (1823-1841). Doctoral Dissertation in History – Uerj. Rio de Janeiro, 2010. p.42.

¹¹ As examples of work in this area, see: SOUZA, 2010; MICELI, Sergio. *A elite eclesiástica brasileira. 1890-1930*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2009; SERBIN, Kenneth. P. *Padres, celibato e conflito social: uma história da Igreja católica no Brasil*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2008; WERNET, Augustin. *A Igreja paulista no século XIX: a Reforma de D. Antônio Joaquim de Melo (1851-1861)*. São Paulo: Ática, 1987; ROMANO, Roberto. *Igreja contra o Estado: crítica ao populismo católico*. São Paulo: Kairós, 1979; RUBERT, Arlindo. *A Igreja no Brasil: galicanismo imperial (1822-1889)*. Porto Alegre: Pallotti, 1993. v.4.

¹² Despite the common inheritance of the regalism inherited from the Luso-Brazilian enlightenment, there were priests who were religiously guided by liberal principles, as was the case of Diogo Feijó and some political priests close to him, such as Custódio Dias, José Bento, Amaral Gurgel and Maria de Moura, amongst others. These priests had very liberal ideas about the liberty of the Brazilian Church in relation to the universal Church. Assuming that there was a distinction between dogma and discipline, they sought to accommodate religious discipline to the circumstances of Brazil, with the purpose of giving the Church of the Empire its own characteristics, which were more national and closer to the religious model they advocated. For this they believed in the competence and the legitimacy of the interference of the civil power to examine the subjects which appeared in papal bulls, as well as determining the internal reforms which the Church should undergo. Without fleeing from the field of influence of regalist thought, but imposing serious restriction on the interference of the state in Church matters, was the group of priests led by the Archbishop of Bahia, Romualdo Antônio de Seixas, assisted by the Bishop of Maranhão, Marcos Antônio de Sousa, known in the historiography as the ‘conservative Catholics.’ To the contrary of the ‘liberal clergy’, they defended a greater alignment with the directives of Rome, proposing the regeneration of the Church according to the patterns established in the Council of Trent. They defended a Church for Brazil with a more universal nature and Europeanized, at the same time that they proposed greater autonomy for the Brazilian Church in relation to temporal power.

¹³ MOREL, Marco. *As transformações dos espaços públicos: imprensa, atores políticos e sociabilidades na cidade imperial (1820-1840)*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2005.

¹⁴ AZZI, Riolando. *O clero no Brasil: uma trajetória de crises e reformas*. Brasília: Rumos, 1992.

¹⁵ BRASIL, Gérson. *O Regalismo brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Cátedra, 1978.

¹⁶ BOURDIEU, Pierre. *A economia das trocas simbólicas*. São Paulo: Perspectiva, 2007. p.37.

¹⁷ Citado em ARAÚJO, Emanuel. Tão vasto, tão ermo, tão grande: o sertão e o sertanejo nos tempos coloniais. In: DEL PRIORE, Mary (Org.) *Revisão do Paraíso*. Rio de Janeiro: Campus, 2000.

¹⁸ Citado em ARAÚJO, 2000. p.78.

¹⁹ FILHO, João Dornas. *O padroado e a igreja brasileira*. São Paulo: Cia. Ed. Nacional, 1938.

²⁰ LASLETT, Peter. *O mundo que nós perdemos*. Lisboa: Cosmos, 1975.

²¹ SILVA, Ana Rosa Clochet da. *Inventando a Nação: intelectuais ilustrados e estadistas luso-brasileiros na crise do Antigo Regime Português*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2006.

²² LOURENÇO, Eduardo. Portugal e os Jesuítas. *Oceanos*, Lisboa: Comissão Nacional para a Comemoração dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, n.12, 1992.

²³ CARVALHO, Flávio Reis de. *Um Iluminismo português? A reforma da Universidade de Coimbra (1772)*. São Paulo: Annablume, 2008. p.52.

²⁴ *Compêndio Histórico do Estado da Universidade de Coimbra no Tempo da Invasão dos Denominados Jesuítas e dos Estragos Feitos nas Ciências e nos Professores e Diretores que a Regem pelas Maquinações, e Publicações dos Novos Estatutos por eles Fabricados*. Lisboa: Régia Officina Typ., 1771. p.IX-X.

²⁵ The Oratorian priests were responsible for the introduction of these ideas in Coimbra. They did this through Lyon Theology, also called Lugdunense Theology, a manual which gave Christian rulers and princes the right to convoke Councils and to alter disciplinary points of the Church. It was condemned by Rome for this reasons and placed on the *Index* in 1792, which did not prevent it “from becoming the third most read manual among Brazilian clerics.” Another instrument for spreading Galican-Jansenist ideas was the *Catecismo de Montpellier*, by the Oratorian François-Aimé Pouget. This work, which replaced Jesuit catechisms, called on the clergy and the literate laity to read the bible daily, approximating Protestantism. (AZZI, Riolando. *A crise da Cristandade e o projeto liberal: história do pensamento católico no Brasil*. São Paulo: Paulinas, 1991. v.II).

²⁶ It is worth highlighting that the royal professors were to a great extent members of the clergy. The lack of qualified personnel obliged the state to use clergy, leading to an apparent return to the situation before the expulsion of the Jesuits, in which teaching was intimately associated with the ecclesiastic institution. (ANDRADE, Antônio Alberto Banha de. A Reforma Pombalina dos Estudos Menores em Portugal e no Brasil. *Revista de História*, São Paulo: USP, v.LVI, ano XXVIII, n.112, out.-dez. 1977).

²⁷ The principal evidence of this fact was in the assistance sought from the Oratorians – recognized as the first to publically oppose the ‘confused and dark’ scholastic methods – many of whom were chosen for professorships in the future reformed university (SILVA, 2006).

²⁸ CARVALHO, José Murilo de. *A construção da ordem: a elite política imperial*. Brasília: Campus, 1981.

²⁹ SILVA, Ana Rosa Clochet da. A formação do homem público no Portugal setecentista: 1750-1777. *Intellèctus*, Rio de Janeiro: Uerj, v.2, 2003.

³⁰ NEVES, Guilherme Pereira das. O Seminário de Olinda: educação, cultura e política nos tempos modernos. Dissertação (Mestrado) Instituto de Ciências Humanas e Filosofia, Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF). Niterói (RJ), 1984.

³¹ In these spaces what were important were masonry, the Brazilian Historical and Geographic Institute (*Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro*), the Society of Assistance for National Industry (*Sociedade Auxiliadora da Indústria Nacional*) and the Society for the Defense of National Independence and Liberty (*Sociedade Defensora da Independência e Liberdade Nacional*), as well as multiple insertions in the spheres of education and the periodical press in this period (SOUZA, 2010, p.90-109).

³² The propensity of the Brazilian clergy to approximate the ideas of the century even occurred within the ambit of this institutional formation, since these ideas infiltrated seminaries. BERNARDES, Denis Antônio de Mendonça. *O patriotismo constitucional*: Pernambuco, 1820-1822. São Paulo: Hucitec; Recife: Ed. UFPE, 2006.

³³ This theme is recurrent in the documentation of the General Councils of the Provinces, the first draft of provincial legislative power, written in 1823. In researching this documentation for the case of Minas Gerais, it was possible to systematize the problematic related to the actions of priests who destabilized the ongoing institutional arrangement. See: SILVA, Ana Rosa Clochet da. A aplicação da justiça em Minas Gerais: tensões e controvérsias em torno da lei, 1822-1831. In: OLIVEIRA, Cecília Helena de Salles; BITTENCOURT, Vera Lúcia Nagib; COSTA, Wilma Peres (Org.) *Soberania e conflito*: configurações do Estado Nacional no Brasil do século XIX. São Paulo: Hucitec, 2010. p.287-336.

³⁴ This action varied from education to the civil registration of births, deaths, marriages and wills, including meeting needs for assistance and holding religious rituals and sacraments. See: HAUCK, João Fagundes; FRAGOSO, Hugo et al. *A História da Igreja no Brasil: ensaio de interpretação a partir do povo. Segunda Época século XIX*. Petrópolis (RJ): Vozes, 1980. p.14-15.

³⁵ VELLASCO, Ivan. As seduções da ordem: violência, criminalidade e administração da justiça: Minas Gerais – século 19. Bauru (SP): Edusc; São Paulo: Anpocs, 2004. p.113.

³⁶ “Ofício de D. Rodrigo José de Menezes a Martinho de Melo e Castro, de 31 de dezembro de 1781”, cited in ANASTASIA, Carla Maria Junho. *A geografia do crime*. Violência nas Minas Gerais Setecentistas. Belo Horizonte: Ed. UFMG, 2005. p.45.

³⁷ According to Clotilde Paiva, along with Minas Novas, Sertão do Alto São Francisco, Triângulo, Extremo Noroeste and Sertão do Rio Doce, Paracatu shaped the group of regions with the lowest level of development. PAIVA, Clotilde Andrade. *População e economia nas Minas Gerais do século XIX*. Doctoral Thesis – Depto. de História, FFLCH, USP. São Paulo, 1996. p.117.

³⁸ MATA-MACHADO, Bernardo. *História do Sertão Noroeste de Minas Gerais (1690-1930)*. Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial, 1991. p.50; SOUZA, Marcos Spagnuolo de. A ocupação

do Vale do Rio São Francisco: século XVII e XVIII. Masters Thesis – Universidade Federal de Goiás. Goiânia, 2002.

³⁹ In relation to the nature of these disputes, see: SILVA, 2010.

⁴⁰ “Registro de Offícios do Governo Provisório ao Ministério”, de 28 ago. 1823. In: Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial – SP 07, fls. 191v e 192.

⁴¹ According to Carla Anastasia, this was the case of the Vicar of Matias Cardoso – who had been working to extend his jurisdiction in the immense territory, as well as instigating the insubordination of those loyal to the government of Minas –, who was supported by the most famous *régulo* (chief) of the *sertão* of São Francisco, Manoel Nunes Viana, who had tormented royal authorities in the region since the Emboabas War (ANASTASIA, 2005, p.79-80).

⁴² Only in 1854 did Paracatu Parish come to be part of the jurisdiction of Diamantina.

⁴³ According to Oliveira Mello, this was an ‘adventurer, quarrelsome and wandering priest,’ who insisted on living in the villages on the left bank of the São Francisco river, since these belonged to the Bishopric of Pernambuco from which they were about 500 leagues distant. Among the arbitrary things he practiced was resisting the visits of priests sent by the Bishopric of Rio de Janeiro. MELLO, Oliveira. *As minas reveladas: Paracatu no Tempo*. 2.ed. Paracatu (MG): Prefeitura Municipal, 2002. p.179.

⁴⁴ SAINT-HILAIRE, Auguste de. *Viagem às nascentes do Rio São Francisco e pela província de Goiás*. Tomo I. São Paulo: Cia. Ed. Nacional, 1944. p.204-205.

⁴⁵ POHL, Johann Emanuel. *Viagem no interior do Brasil*. Belo Horizonte: Itatiaia; São Paulo: Edusp, 1976. p.102.

⁴⁶ GONZAGA, Olympio. *Memória histórica de Paracatu*. Uberaba (MG): s.n., 1910. p.26.

⁴⁷ Movimento político em Paracatú (1822). *RAPM*, ano de 1898, v.III, p.288-290.

⁴⁸ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Presidência de Província, PP1/30, Cx 2, doc 5, 25/ fev/1826.

⁴⁹ Ofício de Manoel Carneiro de Mendonça – Ouvidor interino – ao Presidente da Província, de 5 ago. 1826. (Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Presidência de Província – PP 1/18, cx 328, doc 53).

⁵⁰ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PP 1 / 18 cx 328, Doc. 1 (São Romão, 20 mar. 1824).

⁵¹ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PP 1 / 1, cx 198, Doc. 27 (Distrito de S. Gonçalves e Milho Verde, em 10 dez. 1831).

⁵² In relation to this, it is worth noting the example of the *inconfidente* Fr. Rolim, a resident of Tejuco, supposedly responsible for spreading the revolutionary ideas in Serro and in the District and whose goods were confiscated by the state. MACHADO FILHO, Aires da Mata. *Arraial do Tijucu – Cidade Diamantina*. São Paulo: Martins, s.d. p.93-94.

⁵³ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PP 1 / 18, cx 152, Doc. 1 (São Romão, 12 abr. 1827).

⁵⁴ SILVEIRA, Marco Antonio. *O universo do indistinto: Estado e sociedade nas minas setecentistas (1735-1808)*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 1997. p.144-145.

⁵⁵ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PP 1 / 18, cx 152, Doc. 3 (Brejo do Salgado, 12 nov. 1828).

⁵⁶ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PP 1 / 18 cx 336, doc. 49.

⁵⁷ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PP 1 / 18 cx 336, doc. 51. (Manoel Joaquim de Carvalho Juiz de Paz do Distrito de S. Miguel e Almas, 25 jun. 1831). 79 names are on the petition.

⁵⁸ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PP 1 / 18, cx 152, Doc. 7. In Bluteau's vocabulary the entry 'plebian' appears as a synonym of 'people,' 'common people,' stripped of those attributes which defined the condition of noble: the 'honors and estimation,' conferred by blood or by the authorization of the Prince. BLUTEAU, Raphael. *Vocabulario Portuguez e Latino*. Lisboa, 1721. v.6, p.546.

⁵⁹ *Carta Missiva de José Fernandes de Sousa para o presidente da Assembleia Nacional, dirigida à Comissão do Ultramar, apresentando os vários pontos que haja necessidade de serem discutidos para o bem do povo daquela Comarca*, de 15 set. 1821. (Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro, Seção de Manuscritos, Avulsos do Conselho Ultramarino – Minas Gerais, ms 544, cx 188, rolo 174, doc 24).

⁶⁰ "Ofício do Presidente da Província à Câmara Municipal de Ouro Preto", de 4 jun. 1831. (Arquivo Público Mineiro, Câmara Municipal de Ouro Preto, 249, p.75).

⁶¹ According to Morel, the expression 'moderate liberalism,' before being used in Brazil was part of the political vocabulary of the Iberian peninsula, signifying a determined conception of the state inspired by the Girondins of 1791 (revolution with the king) and the 1688 English parliament. In its Spanish version it sought the 'equilibrium between monarchical authority and Parliament.' In the Portuguese case, it was characterized by the predominance of monarchical sovereignty, cohabiting with the representation of the Councils. In the Brazilian case, it was expressed in its conservative version – wanting "to preserve the social order and to implement some transformations in the political order" –, which implied in the scenario of the First Kingdom removing the extremes of absolutists and the exalted. Thus, the dilemma in intending to "found a new order and to avoid the rupture of a national revolution." MOREL, 2005, p.117-127.

⁶² "Congratulação da Câmara de Ouro Preto a V. M. I. pela visita realizada à Província de Minas Gerais, em 1831". (Arquivo Nacional, pac. 758).

⁶³ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PM, PP 1 / 18 cx 315, Doc. 37 (Vila do Príncipe, 11 dez. 1831).

⁶⁴ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PP 1 / 18 cx 336, doc. 55. (Vila do Príncipe, 11 dez. 1831).

⁶⁵ ANDRADE, Marcos Ferreira de. *Rebeldia e resistência: as revoltas escravas na Província de Minas Gerais*. Masters Thesis – UFMG. Belo Horizonte, 1996.

⁶⁶ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PP 1 / 18 cx 187, Doc. 8. (Vila de São João Del Rei, jul. 1831).

⁶⁷ Arquivo Público Mineiro, Seção Provincial, PP 1 / 18 cx 314, Doc. 20. (S. João, 10 ago. 1831).

⁶⁸ SILVA, Ana Rosa Cloquet da. De comunidades a Nação: o tempo-espaço da modernidade política mineira. In: ALMANACK BRAZILIENSE (*online*), São Paulo, v.2, n.2, 2005. p.43-63.