

Mr. Citizen Manoel Inácio and the conquest of citizenship: the black peasantry of Morro Alto and the Republic that was¹

Sr. Sidão Manoel Inácio e a conquista da cidadania: o campesinato negro do Morro Alto e a República que foi

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RESUMO

O presente artigo tem o objetivo de analisar as possibilidades de conquista de direitos cidadãos por parte do campesinato negro do Rio Grande do Sul durante a Primeira República, tomando o litoral norte do estado como *locus* de observação. Contesto, ou ao menos busco relativizar, a historiografia que enfatiza as limitações e obstáculos desse segmento populacional, oriundo da escravidão, para atingir tais prerrogativas. Procuo demonstrar os esforços e eventuais êxitos no alcance desses objetivos por meio de três grandes questões: o pagamento regular de impostos, o acesso à polícia e à justiça e a atuação militar. Palavras-chave: campesinato negro; pós-abolição; cidadania.

ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze the possibilities of conquest of citizen rights by the black peasantry of Rio Grande do Sul, the southern Brazilian state, during the First Republic. This state's northern coast is our *locus* of observation. We contest, or at least try to relativize, the bibliography that emphasizes the limitations and obstacles faced by this population group, which emerged out of slavery, to reach these prerogatives. We try to demonstrate attempts and success to achieve these aims through three important questions: the regular payment of taxes, access to police and justice, and involvement in the military.

Keywords: black peasantry; post-abolition; citizenship.

In a undated letter in the possession of the granddaughter of the recipient, a person by the name of Saturnino Bernardo Souza, in addition to the habitual pleasantries in which he wished good health to Manoel Inácio Marques, presented some figures from a current account he held. I cite this document due to the manner in which Saturnino addressed Manoel Inácio: *Sr Sidão*. – an

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abbreviation of citizen – Manoel Inácio.² Manoel Inácio Osório Marques (1847-1906) was a slave from the Morro Alto plantation, who had assumed the surname of his former master when freed (1884). Living with his first cousin Felisberta, also a slave, he left a large number of descendants who, with the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of other slaves, demanded the right to the lands of the old plantation, as they had been recognized as “remnants of *quilombos*.” Morro Alto *quilombo* is located on the frontier between the Gaucho municipalities of Osório and Maquiné, on the northern coast of Rio Grande do Sul. The territory demanded today covers Morro Alto (a junction between a branch of Highway BR-101 and RS-407), Aguapés, Barranceira, Faxinal do Morro Alto, Ramalhete, Borba, Ribeirão, Despraiado and Prainha. There slaves had once raised cattle and planted sugarcane. Nowadays their descendants carry out the same activities, but also plant bananas, extract minerals, and form the seasonal labor force for the summer Gaucho beaches. Manoel Inácio, said by his descendants to have been the son of the *senhor* (literally the lord, the plantation owner), was a specialized captive: a carpenter, he was able to accumulate a nest-egg which allowed him acquire land from the plantation family for his own family. Nor was Tampouco Felisberta a slave who worked on the plantations: rather she worked on domestic tasks, which gave her descendants a certain sense of distinctiveness.

The idea of citizenship already seemed to be incorporated in experience of the region, at least as the vocative used by Saturnino to address Manoel. The meaning of this citizenship in the rural areas of Rio Grande do Sul at the beginning of the twentieth century has to be substantialized, especially considering that it approached by the historiography under the sign of *incompleteness*. Although the idea of citizen should be denaturalized – due to its variable and contextual historic dimension –, in Morro Alto at the beginning of the twentieth century it was the order of the day. The aim of this article is therefore to problematize disputes over access to citizenship and modes of relationship with the state apparatus, investigating three aspects: attempts at regularizing landholding, use of the judicial system, and military engagement.

Some studies, even while they do not deny the real difficulties for citizen participation between 1889 and 1930, have questioned the perception of the rural population as a body easily manipulated – an electoral ‘corral’ – by powerful ranchers (Rios, 2007; Mattos, 2012). This vision was frequently part of a widespread stigmatization diffused by the ideologues of the Vargas Era about the period which preceded them. Seen as a moment of backwardness, chaos and disorganization, the ‘Old’ Republic was little by little crystalized in the

political imagination as a moment of fraudulent political procedures and the dominance of the '*coronel*' over the population. In accordance with this perspective the people were incapable of collective action. However as Gomes and Abreu note, "still unknown, basically due to a lack of studies, a rich movement of actors – intellectuals, workers, sectors of the middle and working classes – involved in the field of political tradition" (Abreu; Gomes, 2009, p.4). The purpose of this article is to give a response to his historiographic demand, in relation to the former slaves and their descendants on the north coast of Rio Grande do Sul in the post-abolition period.

They were not social subjects stripped of will and they used the possibilities available to them, aiming at inserting themselves as citizens. In his study of social movements simultaneous and subsequent to abolition in the Recôncavo Baiano region, Fraga Filho (2006, Epílogo) highlighted in the struggle for the expansion of spaces of citizenship one of the meanings leant by former slaves to liberty, and one of the objectives aimed at when the appeal to racial hierarchies sought to hinder the exercise of civil equality. Although he did not expand on this as much as it deserved, it is of great relevance that he postulated it, especially because of some works of reference which tend to problematize citizenship in the post-abolition period from a negative perspective.

Following the steps of the Bahian historian, I propose here an investigative exercise – diminutive of course, since it is restricted to a narrowly delimited region and to a very reduced family base sample – into how descendants of slaves linked liberty and citizenship, to the extent that each term in the pair was reached and expanded through the affirmation of the other. What was found was an active posture in relation to the state, and not always reactive, since occupying its spaces and having it as an interlocutor were possibilities incorporated in their strategies for life in freedom.

For the investigation, I gathered a very wide diversity of documents: interviews stored in the Laboratory of Oral and Image History of Fluminense Federal University (*Laboratório de História Oral e Imagem da Universidade Federal Fluminense* – hereafter LABHOI-UFF), family documents ceded by residents of the region and copied by me, as well as sparse papers from notary offices and public administration collected in archives in Rio Grande do Sul, such as Osório Public Archive and the Public and Historical Archives of the State of Rio Grande do Sul. The methodology used to deal with this wide variety of documents was the reconstitution of individual and family trajectories – such as those of Manoel Inácio Marques and his descendants – of a segment

recognizable as belonging to the local elite of the black peasantry of the region. I discovered that it managed to establish itself in its own glebe. I admit that this is not a *representative* segment of the local population in statistical terms, therefore the conclusions extracted from here are not intended to generalize the case. Nevertheless, they point to interesting paths for new research that do not necessarily refer to the north coast of Rio Grande do Sul: while they do not exactly indicate *shared behavior*, at least they show *available possibilities* which, despite not being in the reach of everyone, could lead to the relativization of some apparent interpretative consensuses.

A focus of this nature contrasts with some established historiographic narratives about the question. For conciseness, I chose to look at the bibliography from the 1980s onwards, not dealing with classic readings, such as Florestan Fernandes (Fernandes; Bastide, 1971; Fernandes, 1965). Nevertheless, my criticism is also directed at the São Paulo Sociological School, since this also emphasized the lack of access of blacks to citizenship. In a more recent approach, José Murilo de Carvalho (1987), in his study of the implementation of the Republic, directed his focus at the frustrations of contemporaries in relation to the new regime. In studies of the First Republic there is a tendency to privilege the urban, although, for example, in 1920, 73.56% of the population of Rio Grande do Sul lived in rural zones (Fundação de Economia..., 1981, p.127). Carvalho perceived a divorce between the Republic, city, and citizenship, lecturing about the “Republic that never was,” in other words it focused on abortive republican projects, as perceived by the inhabitants of the capital. However, at no moment did he intend to generalize his analysis beyond the reality of Rio de Janeiro. Nevertheless, the Republic is melancholically characterized by an unsubstantiated citizenship.

In a more recent work, the same author relativizes some of his positions, admitting possibilities of active citizenship even during the imperial period, consolidated in the abolitionist movement. Nevertheless, he defined those who participated in the urban revolts of the First Revolt as “a sketch of a citizen, even in negative,” since their perception of the state was merely reactive and purposeful (Carvalho, 2008, p.75). While there was apathy, the specific idea of citizens’ rights and the duties of the state was measured by an implicit pact of non-interference in their private lives, and not by an intention to participate in this.

Although it does not depart from a victimizing posture of blacks after 1888, and with all the merits of highlighting the exclusion barriers to which those leaving slavery were submitted, Cunha and Gomes point to the

contingent nature of the citizenship obtained, qualifying the condition of 'citizen' with the prefix 'almost.' They highlight that the national citizenship project was frequently imposed from top down and far from being passively accepted, it could be appreciated under the sign of refusal – in the triviality of daily practices. We are thus distant from Carvalho, since inaccessible citizenship is presented as possibly refused.

The fact is that the experience of the shaping and resistance to this reluctance have been understood as adjustment strategies, of acceptance – at times passively – of the political projects which conceived the 'national citizen.' The idea of accentuating and underlining the provision nature of the statute of citizenship – the title of almost citizen – is justified by a desire. Emphasizing the comprehension of the cases and experiences of the refusal of the disciplinary project which judicially created the figure of the citizen and the national. These practices are far from constituting examples of resistance of social criticism wrapped in a single political discourse, and much more present in trivial situations experimented in daily work routines, in relations with the state and official institutions, in interpersonal relations experienced in domestic spaces, in short at every moment when the game of power of the exercise of equality between men and women marked by their social origin or color is being played. (Cunha; Gomes, 2007, p.14)

However, the evidence that I will present demonstrates that avoidance in relation to the state dimension – whether due to the limited possibilities for exercising citizens' rights unless in situations of state interference, or due to the rejection of inserting themselves in disciplinary projects – was not an option taken by all. Some descendants of slaves made themselves into taxpayers, became involved in legal cases, became soldiers. It is not believed that this occurred in terms of a state framework; to the contrary, it seems that these forms of interlocution with the state apparatus could have been used to allow the obtaining of individual aims.

While these approaches have the merit of highlighting the unequal conditions faced by descendants of slaves in their insertion of a free society, minimizing their capacity for actions in the sense of a *search* for citizenship presented as hindered. It appears that this is the challenge faced by scholars involved in the analysis of the possibilities of citizen actions of former slaves in the post-abolition period: not ignoring the obstacles faced to insert themselves as citizens in life after captivity, but also not belittling their organizational capacity and their willingness to conquer the rights of citizenship.

TAXES PAID ON TIME

We have a series of receipts for the payment of land taxes, preserved by relatives of Manoel Inácio until the present day. Starting in 1899 they run until 1941, with some interruptions. The documentation is relevant for the writing of an agrarian history of the presence of the family in the region and, in a context of land demands, as proof of continuous territorial occupation until the 1940s, at least. More than this, it demonstrates a type of initiative on the part of black peasantry in their interlocution with the state apparatus, to the extent that it presents a concern in keeping up to date with taxes – something which could probably be easily evaded –, as well as with the esteem for the maintenance of the receipts for these payments.

The black peasants of that family regularized the situation of their land in terms of property tax in a systematic form through the First Republic. This practice can be seen as an extortive activity by some governors who, there can be no doubt about this, imposed them; nevertheless, it also represented a manner of regularizing and proving ownership over the land. It was for no other reason that these papers were preserved by their descendants, who were actually illiterate. They are more than just receipts for a tax disagreeably paid: they are also symbols of pride for participating in state channels and evidence of land ownership and its regularity vis-à-vis the government.

I argue that if all that what was involved was the rejection of invasive state interference, and *reactive* action against this intrusion, on the part of the ‘sketches of citizens’ or ‘almost citizens,’ they simply would have not paid the land taxes. To the contrary, they interacted with the state power *through the channels prescribed for this*, and not to ask for benefits. The possibility of becoming part of the government machine through extraordinary means was designated by Carvalho as *estadania*, or ‘state-ship’ (1987, p.65). The case analyzed by me, however, indicated effective citizen participation. This is the reason I refuse to define the Republic as *negative*: I seek to *qualify it*, I ask myself about *which Republic it was*, what it could have represented for the group I study. It is not enough to identify the negation of citizens’ rights; it is also fundamental, turning things upside down, to ask about how people saw citizenship.

Axt underlined that part of the political program of the *Partido Republicano Rio-Grandense* (PRR – Rio Grande Republican Party) was the replacement of export taxes and property transmission taxes with land tax. The *Castilhistas* believed that this was a manner of reducing the fiscal burden on production, and it became, along with export tax, the foundation of the state’s

tax revenues (Axt, 2011). From the point of view of this author, it was a way for the Castilhistas-Borgistas state to expand control over economic activity. He demonstrates that productive sectors identified land tax as a “lien on property ownership” and that its implementation counted on strong resistance of *estancieiros*, independent of party affiliations.

According to Axt, land tax not only harmed livestock farmers, but above all landowners in the colonial regime. We can also, however, expand this conclusion to small producers in general, since it was not only Italian and German colonists who were *minifundiários* in Rio Grande do Sul at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century (Silva, 2004; 2009). Axt, in summary, shows that “through the land tax PRR governments transferred resources from rural landholders and especially from small landowners in the colonization region to mercantile and financial sectors and to large exporters” (Axt, 2011, p.352).

From what the documentation in the power of the grandchildren of Manoel Inácio and Felisberta indicates, there was a municipal tax on land before that established by Castilhos, and which coexisted with it for a period. The family kept tax receipts from the Municipal Intendency dated from 1899 with the value of 2000 réis, and another paid, also to the municipality of Conceição do Arroio, with the value of 2\$500 réis, in 1905. A book in the Historic Archive of Osório registered the taxes paid to the municipality in 1904, in accordance with the 19 December law. The taxes were invariably either 2\$500 réis, as paid by Manoel Inácio, or 5\$000. Instead of measuring the extension of each property and charging the due tax, the Intendency grossly divided landholdings into two bands and attributed to the former the venal value of one *conto* (i.e., one thousand) réis and to the second 500,000 réis, charging respectively 5\$000 and 2\$500 réis in taxes.

The predominance of smaller properties can be verified: 1386 out of 1736, or 79.84%. Included in this aggregate are most the relatives of Manoel Inácio who figured among the taxpayers, but there was also his half-sister, Herculano Pastorino, who prospered at the point of figuring in the higher land band.

The preservation of the documentary corpus constitutes a manner of proving possession of that land: being taxpayers to the public coffers, their rights over the family portion remained uncontested. Ana Rios (2007, p.15) underlined the *political* connotation of land acquisition by freed families, since this implied a “clear desire for legal protection and greater independence in relation to landowners than the unexceptional arrangement of informal occupations and submission of clientele networks.” *Mutatis mutandis*, the same reasoning can be used for the example of regularization of the landholding situation through the payment of taxes.

Table 1 – Rural land tax payers belonging to the family of Manoel Inácio Marques (1904)

Page	District	Register	Name	Relationship with Manoel Inácio	Value of goods	Amount to pay
4	1	133	Belizário Manoel de Oliveira	Natural son	500\$000	2\$500
7	1	218	Felipe Angélico	Brother	500\$000	2\$500
9	1	306	Herculano Pastorino	Half-brother	1:000\$000	5\$000
14	1	497	Luiz Eufrásio Marques	Brother-in-law	500\$000	2\$500
15	1	525	Manuel Inácio	---	500\$000	2\$500
18	1	641	Romão Inácio Marques	Father-in-law and uncle	500\$000	2\$500

Source: Arquivo Público de Osório – Antônio Stenzel Filho, código Autoridades Municipais-05.

I did not find in the Historic Archive of Osório any record of rural taxes, except for the 1904 fiscal year. Furthermore, the only records of municipal taxes in the power of the granddaughter of Manoel Inácio refer to the fiscal years of 1899 and 1905. It is probable that this source of revenue was removed from municipalities with the creation of the state land tax in 1902, and its implementation in 1903. The family kept state receipts for the fiscal years of 1904 and 1905, concomitant to the rural tax for the intendency of Conceição do Arroio. The value paid by the state government was proportional to the extension of the land in hectares³ – 35, in the case of Manoel Inácio Osório Marques – and not in function of arbitrarily bands of land size. After this year, we have a long series of state taxes, which indicates the extinction of municipal taxes.

Covering the period 1904-1940, the payment receipts conserved have rare interruptions. However, the documents available do not necessarily refer to the entirety of the land, since the payment of taxes was divided between the widow Felisberta and her children. The total of tax declarations by the mother and her children does not exist for each year, with the exception of the years of 1906, 1910, 1919-1922, 1935 and 1940. For each year, however, there are documents for at least one declarant. Felisberta paid 19 of the 41 tax receipts

held by her granddaughters – or the 34 tax receipts signed after the death of Manoel Inácio – which indicates that the former slave was a lady zealous about the conservation and regularization of the legal situation of the family land.

The conservation of documents, given that she did not know how to read them, could have been useful *for when they needed them* – as they stated in a testimony to me (Weimer, 2008, chp. 2). More than the regular payment of taxes, the act of guarding them in the hope of proving land ownership, in some eventuality, contrasts with any attempt to perceive this population as marginal to the action of the state, in which they participated according to their possibilities. Another example researched reinforced this line of argumentation.

In 1913 the inventory of Manoel Marques da Rosa, belonging to the old landholding family, was opened. In the middle of this document, it was discovered that Hermenegildo Luís Francisco, at the same time nephew and related through marriage to “Sr. Sidão Manoel Inácio,” worked in a non-paid form for the deceased. 300\$000 réis were reserved from the total estate of the deceased to, only at the moment of his death, to pay Hermenegildo for “services he rendered.” He was a member of that black peasantry, but he had been born free: his mother, Serafina Francisca Pastorina, sister of Manoel Inácio, had been *alforriada* (freed) in 1867, at the age of nine.⁴ The most tenuous connections with captivity did not prevent this form of semi-servile labor relationship which, nevertheless, allowed the access to be won to a *quinhão* (share) of land, which was finally rewarded with half of a *sítio* in Espraiado upon the death of the member of the landowning family.

Nevertheless, the negotiations for the payment of Hermenegildo were slower than expected. In April 1915, a petition was presented asking for the adjudication of the 25 *braças* of which he was heir. The argument he used was the need to “receive the form for the payment of the respective tax.”⁵ I mean, the plaintiff *actively* sought in court his condition as a taxpayer. It is possible, and even probable, that this was only an argument to accelerate the adjudication of his property. Nevertheless, to use it, the plaintiff believed that it could be convincing and therefore nothing much beyond the cultural logic and current practices of that time.

In becoming taxpayers – and it would have been very easy not to pay taxes –, they made themselves into citizens. But for what reason make the payment of taxes such as great space for carrying – or better symbolizing – citizen participation? Citizenship was umbilically linked to the land question. It was directly proportional to the autonomy conquered in relation to large land owners. Affirming the condition of black peasantry of least dependence on

fazendeiros was to respond less to their excesses, “do not endure outrages,” “do not roll on the road” and “control yourself.” These expressions are recurrent among the interviewees. While the “peasant project” was a great ambition (Machado, 1994; Mattos, 2005b), the taxes paid were a manner of symbolizing the conquest of this condition. I present here an initial condition to this discussion, which is inspired by a single – albeit rich – documentary corpus; referring furthermore to a family of the local elite. For the others, however, the interlocation with the police and judicial apparatus was another sphere for the possible exercise of citizenship.

SEARCHING FOR LEGAL PROTECTION

On 15 September 1928, Anacleto Bibiano Fortes sought the police, asking for a forensic examination of his wife, Eliza, who had been assaulted on the previous day by his brother-in-law and the latter’s son, José.⁶ The conflict had dragged on, from what can be understood from the records, for years, due to the proximity of the undivided lands of the brothers Anacleto, André, and Cipriana, in the place called Borba, on the outskirts of Morro Alto. In effect, in 1923, on the death of their mother Marcelina Cristina Marques, the children did the inventory, equally dividing into strips, fields, and *banhados* (wetlands) the land which measured 110 meters in front of Borba and 34 hectares in the Ribeirão.⁷ It turned out that the activities of a producer could interfere with the others, implying or maximizing enmities.

This was what happened with the brothers André and Anacleto. When there were no fences marking the boundaries between properties and *roças* (small farms), one important cause of conflict was when animals belonging to one person would ruin the crops of his neighbors. According to the victim, she had sent three of her young sons to round up pigs which had been housed on the lands of their uncle. They returned crying because as well as having been prevented from taking the animals, André Marcelino Fortes and José Fortes had threatened to hit them. Eliza then sent her two older sons, called Luiz and João, to get the pigs, but they similarly repelled. According to her testimony, the boys reported the following:

we were bringing the pigs because they are ours, then André took out a club and his son José pulled out a knife and a club, hitting her sons and threatening them with the knife. Elisia then said to José: “let my sons take the pigs out of here because they are mine and not yours; do you want to kill my sons?” After that she ordered the

boys to get the pigs, André and José Fortes again attacked her, the declarant, and her children, hitting her; at this time another son of the declarant arrived, with the name José Luiz Marques, I mean, José Luiz Fortes, and said to the aggressors: “so you want [8v] to kill my mother?” To which José son of André answered “I want to kill this mare and you can look for whatever authorities you want.”

I do not intend to enter into details. For now, it is enough to say that the courts considered the accusation of aggression to be unfounded, based on the version of the accused that it was legitimate self-defense. What was in play was a tacit recognition of the right of poor peasants to defend their *roças* when damaged by neighbors' animals. It is enough to highlight that the accused had challenged Eliza “to look for whatever authorities you want,” which she did. While the courts were not the preferential for resolving conflicts, they were used for extraordinary situations. With the aim of inciting and challenging the other party as an extraordinary possibility, it is revealed as being an alternative for the resolution of problems.

Dealing with another ethnic group – but from the same social class –, Maíra Vendrame (2013) found that conflicts among Italian peasant immigrants were generally resolved through extrajudicial channels. The courts were used when all other resources had been exhausted. In these situations, we can say that the black peasantry of Morro Alto turned to the courts, not staying outside it. When André Marcelino Fortes won the case, a previous problem was resolved (Manoel Cipriano da Rosa, nephew of both involved, stated that he “knew there had been intrigues for more or less a year and a half, and the cause was the question of the *roça*”)⁸ which could not be resolved through the usual community channels – whether peaceful or violent.

We can say the same about the conflict which opposed Leopoldina Florentina da Silva, beaten with a brake by her rival Esmeraldina Maria dos Santos, a resident of Morro Alto, on 15 November 1932. Florentina went to the police for a forensic examination, and Esmeraldina was denounced on 14 December. Once again, I will not detain myself with the details, when what interests me is that, once again, we have a history of rivalries between the aggressor and the injured party, which only became judicialized at a later moment.

In effect, Esmeraldina had borrowed a parasol belonging to the daughter of the victim and had damaged it. After that they had come to throw insults and threats at each other.⁹ In the end Esmeraldina was acquitted, a decision in which the opinions of the neighbors about the temperaments of the two women weighed a lot. In a previous study, I noted that Florentina was rejected by

her neighbors, very possibly for having caused “undesired interference in local conflict resolution logics.” “Florentina liked to ‘cause fights and riots,’ ‘she was not well behaved,’ she was ‘a gossip about other people’s lives’ and ‘badly behaved and was always fighting with her neighbors, seeking to live in constant riots,’” these were some of what the locals said. The judicial system was subject to the influence of these local ideas, as a bad reputation in the local community had an impact on the judicial decision that went against her:

This local perception of justice apparently ‘contaminated’ legal operators – at the least they let themselves be influenced by the perception which neighbors had of the defendants. Stated otherwise, there was a local idea of justice in which legality was not impermeable. *The appreciation of the behavior by neighbors was not only taken into account, but requested as a key part of the elucidation of criminal events.* (Weimer, 2011, p.175, italics added)

We, therefore, not only have black peasants zealous of their rights, ready to use police stations and courts when the traditional channels for resolving problems were exhausted, but they were also capable of influencing the judicial system with their local ideas of rights. Moving beyond the influence of the judicial system, involvement in armed conflict can at times be thought of as the exercise of an ‘armed citizenship.’ Next, we will look at the significance given to this term.

MARAGATOS AND PICA-PAUS

The 1893-1895 Civil War in the region of Morro Alto, despite being taken as defining of experiences of liberty in the post-abolition period (Weimer, 2008), was a process that virtually did not exist in the memory of their descendants. This absence is intriguing. It is not silence about a painful past, in the terms of Pollak (1989), but specifically a forgetfulness: there is no opposition, resistance, or demonstration of suffering about the subject, but an estrangement about a question which is alien to them and memories that are always imprecise.

The Federalist Revolt is interpreted, roughly speaking, as a movement of the rural elite of Rio Grande do Sul, members of the old monarchist parties, reacting to the establishment of the Republic and the rise to power of a minority group of radical and exclusivist republicans, grouped in the *Partido Republicano Rio-Grandense* (PRR), under the leadership of Júlio de Castilhos.

The Federalists, also called *Maragatos* – on the outbreak of the war –, were in favor of a parliamentary political system, while the republicans, called *Pica-Paus*, defended presidentialism. The political chronicle of the revolutionary process is much more complex than this general outline, as it was full of factionalism, variations, and programmatic variations, alliances, and dissidences. What is important is that the Federalist forces were centered around the frontier with Uruguay, from where they marched towards the states of Santa Catarina and Paraná. I do not intend to contribute to the analysis of the political history of the Civil War here, which is already very well documented.

In my Master's thesis I focused on the social history of the participation of former slaves in the Civil War (Weimer, 2008, chp. 3), concluding that no automatic alignment of the freed slaves with any of the conflicting factions was observed, nor any unquestionable loyalty to the parties of their former masters, nor rebellion and necessary opposition to them. I found, first, the non-existence of significant ideologies between *Pica-Paus* and *Maragatos* in relation to the question of the social insertion of former slaves, which could justify the majority participation with or other group. I also noted a situational game and micropolitics, involved in which were the social relations formed during slavery, which determined where engagement would be more convenient. In summary, it was a privileged moment to bargain for better living conditions.

Barcellos et al. (2004, p.147) attribute the tribulations resulting from the Federalist Revolt in the Morro Alto region to the spatial movements of former slaves to more tranquil regions, accompanying the families of their owners. Fifteen telegrams sent to the police chief of Conceição do Arroio, Antônio Marques da Rosa – belonging to the landholding family of Morro Alto –, between February and November 1893, show that there was a strong possibility that the Federalists would coming down from Cima da Serra and attack the *vila* of Conceição do Arroio – the former name of Osório. If this had happened, the Morro Alto plantation would have been overrun by the Federalists. It belonged to the Marques family, allied to the Castilhistas, and was occupied by its former slaves. The documents demonstrate a growing anxiety in Conceição do Arroio and a growing expectation about the arrival of the Federalists, which intensified in September, with numerous urgent telegrams, becoming more scarce and desperate in October and November. The same authors (2004, p.130) gathered evidence of Maragato harassment in the old Morro Alto plantation, including the fire in the house of Coronel Marques (Silva, *apud* Barcellos et al., 2004, p.130).

In my thesis, I suggested the possibility that the acquisition of lands by former slaves had been facilitated by the devaluation of land resulting from the Federalist Revolt. This was certainly not the case of Manoel Inácio and Felisberta, who on the occasion of the war were already established on the land of Espiraído, acquired in 1890.

These restrictions do not annul the fact that various communities were able to use the better conditions offered by the years of war, and those immediately following, with the devaluation of devastated lands and the pauperization of the former landholders. Access to land was facilitated by this situation. (Weimer, 2008, p.235)

The memories of residents in the region involved an abstract remembrance of the Civil War which, nevertheless, can be applied to various other ‘Revolutionary’ episodes in the south of Brazil. In addition to the Federalist Revolt, the 1923 and 1930 ‘revolutions,’¹⁰ closer chronologically, involved the same generically remembered characteristics:

- Flights to the forest were carried out with the purpose of self-protection and hiding herds and products;
- Compulsory military recruitment was imposed by the different sides involved;
- Soldiers obtained resources from residents by force and by request;
- The practice of desertion, once this was possible, indicates that there was no great ideological adhesion to the forces mobilized.¹¹

More than an imprecision of memory in relation to the diversity of ‘revolutionary’ situations in the south of Brazil, from the scenario presented the existence of an *ethnotext* can be noted (Joutard, 1980, p.176-182; Mattos, 2004; 2005a). This term is taken to mean a common cultural substratum among individual interviews, regularities – rarely presented – which indicated a collective narrative about the determined episode. It can be understood from the mutual comparison of various interviews. although it is informed by the research interests of the interviewer, it emerges as a text related to collective memories about not *one* specific ‘revolution,’ but *a sequence* of conflictive processes which could affect that community.

If the memories had fused into a collective text about indistinct wars, it would be natural that most of the memories about episodes of conflict would

be attributed to what was, par excellence, *the* ‘revolutionary’ process of Rio Grande do Sul: the Farrroupilha War. Pesavento highlighted that this is associated with acts of bravery and romanticism, and had, at least according to the regionalist discourse, kept Rio Grande do Sul united during the Empire, while the Federalist Revolt represented in the regional imagination, in addition to some very sinister episodes, the internal division of the state (Pesavento, 1993).

Edite Maria da Rosa, for example, possessed a dagger which she said, after some hesitation, that her paternal grandfather, João Colona, has used in the Farrapos War. Interviewed, she concluded that he fought in the Farrapos with Duque de Caxias – although this would not have been possible chronologically. The insignia on the scabbard of the grandfather’s dagger bear the coat of arms of the Republic. Actually her grandfather had been a police inspector in Conceição do Arroio – according to her own report –, linked to the *Partido Republicano Rio-Grandense*, and as such, despite being a black man, found spaces for empowerment.

Can this alternative form of participation in state mechanisms be considered citizen participation? Certainly not, if we consider Marshall’s (1967) classic approach, which characterized citizenship in terms of *universal* access to rights defined as civil, political, and social, with this tripartite division of his authorship, being chronologically and logically related to the English reality. These rights may or may not be concomitant. It is based on this reference that José Murilo de Carvalho thinks about the idea of citizenship, and these are the parameters which allow him state that “[members of the Army] sought greater participation through belonging to the state, in other words, this did not involve so much citizenship but what we can call *state-ship*” (1987, p.50, original italics). In effect, the universality generally associated with the exercise of citizenship cannot be verified in the case of a privileged and specific insertion through the military condition.

However, later the same author lays out some positions by highlighting the importance of being attentive to the specificities of the Brazilian reality before transposing Marshall’s model:

Nevertheless, it appears to me that a more correct interpretation of the political life of countries like Brazil demands that other forms of participation be taken into account, less formalized and external to the legal mechanisms of representation. It is also necessary to verify to what extent, even in the absence of an organized political people, there existed a sentiment, even a diffuse one, of national identity. This sentiment, as has been observed, almost always accompanies the

expansion of citizenship, although it is not confused with it. It is a type of complement, sometimes a compensation, of citizenship seen as the exercise of rights. (Carvalho, 2008, p.66)

Would it be over-provocative to propose that the so-called ‘state-ship’ constitutes a Brazilian type of citizenship, or also a path to it, not imagined by Marshall? Did it involve a specific disposition of a relationship with the state, a form of assuring rights – exercised and conquered in a particular and familiar environment – completely different from the expectation of classic citizens’ rights listed by the English sociologist? Much ink has been used in the discussion about the relationship between the public sphere and the private exercise of power in Brazil, as well as about the relations of particular dependence which permeated the state space. A deepening of this discussion is outside the objectives of this article, also because any conclusion in this sense using only the case in question would be premature. Nevertheless, it is Carvalho himself who points to the complexity of national citizenship formation process, the English example cannot be taken as a model. However, the previous example of citizens zealous about keeping their tax payments up to date points to the existence of situations of citizenship closer than those listed by Marshall.

It is not known by which mechanisms João Colona became a police inspector, while details about his relations with members of *Partido Republicano* are ignored. Nevertheless, this certainly was an open possibility – in the interlocution with the state apparatus – to ascend socially and guarantee a better life for him and his relatives. He established himself as a producer of foodstuffs in Morro Alto, as we will see below. Whatever the case, he was not ‘bestialized’ by the serious social disputes – principally in Rio Grande do Sul, where there was a civil war – which followed the proclamation of the Republic.

Although Edite remembers João Colona’s narratives as referring to the Farroupilha War, it is in her that we can find the most precise discourse about the Federalist Revolt, because her grandfather had been a police inspector in the republican regime, which indicates a not inconsiderable position within the state machine. According to her reports, he fought in the forest and had been involved in situations where life or death were at play:

Edite – Ah, the war... My grandfather..., he told us... Just that he made us afraid, he said that he had taken part in the war, that they spent days marching through the forest, pursuing, right, that they had fought, and had no fear of dying, right, brave, so... He was a, how can I say it, an inspector, at that time it was called inspector,

right, as well as the mayor, the... the mayor, no, the police chief, right, there was the deputy police chief, right, how is it, the inspector.

Rodrigo – Inspector?

Edite – Yes, inspector, he was an inspector, so he arrested criminals. As my brother was a young boy, so for him, he knew more, he had... Knowledge of life, so he said that to be a man, you had to be courageous, brave; but we joked that no, that he would kill everyone. No, what happens, either him or them, it was one or two, they had to choose, and often he killed people because they had to kill.¹²

The case of Edite's grandfather seems to be an exception, to the extent that he was part of a black 'elite' who rose to a position of inspector among the republican forces. He thereby had a committed relationship with *Partido Republicano Rio-Grandense* (PRR), regularly performing police tasks. The majority of recruits, however, apparently joined without any solid party connection – whether due to more tenuous ideological ties, episodic interests established on a microscopic scale, or pure and simply due to forced recruitment (Weimer, 2008, p.220-236). This appears to have been the case of the father-in-law of Manoel Inácio Filho, the only other person mentioned, apart from the paternal grandfather of Edite, who had a more specific report of participation in the Federalist conflict.

To the contrary of João Colona, Hermenegildo Luiz Francisco, already mentioned as the father-in-law of one of Manoel Inácio's children and the *Pica-Pau* inspector, had fought alongside the *maragatos* – but this is not remembered with much certainty and little attention was given to this information. He was not a member of the armed forces, but a black peasant from the region. In addition, he was forcefully recruited and as soon as he could abandoned the Federalist forces. In this case, to the contrary of what was mentioned above, the war undoubtedly was alien to his anxieties, perspectives, and convictions, and so the struggle was abandoned at the first opportunity. There can be no doubt that no type of exercise of citizenship was at play here.

However, this *Maragato* would marry his daughter with the son of a *Pica-Pau* – thereby overcoming the very high level of mutual hate which emerged in Rio Grande after a civil war in which high – and imprecise – demographic percentages were murdered, a large part being decapitated. This abstraction of partisan antagonism perhaps might be an index of how much that conflict was indifferent to Hermenegildo, who opted for a citizen participation through, as we have seen, taxes and land. In this case I do agree with Carvalho: he was interested in being left in peace, not so much in relation to taxes, but in relation

to the need to not see labor for peasant production removed or having their animals expropriated or their milk stolen – by *Pica-Paus* or *Maragatos*. For the future father-in-law of his daughter, in turn, military toil was nothing more than a mechanism for accumulation to purchase land and ascend to the condition of black peasant.

The 1893-1895 Civil War created profound traumas and bitter divisions in Gaucho society. However, this must not have been so definitive among the black population of Morro Alto. At least this is what is indicated by the alliance between a *Pica-Paus* family and a *Maragatos* one when João Colona and Hermenegildo Luiz Francisco married their children José Inácio da Rosa and Maria Hermenegilda da Rosa, parents of Edite. José Inácio da Rosa acquired land in the proximities of the region his wife was from, and today their children have their land there. In other terms, João Colona fought, but his son also became a small producer of foodstuff. Social ascension by military means was covered by the same ‘peasant project’ which led Manoel Inácio, at the close of the nineteenth century, to acquire land in Espraiado with the aim of producing food. Lands which, once again, fulfilled the role of autonomization in relation to the large landowners.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS: CITIZENSHIP AND THE INTERNAL DIASPORA

In the middle of the twentieth century, many residents abandoned Morro Alto to try their luck in the city. This departure, called “internal diaspora,”¹³ can be perceived as a response to the *débâcle* of peasant family production, due to the subdivision of productive units. However, the reconstruction of their lives in a new environment was not only the result of difficulties for the social reproduction of the peasant family unit, since it also obeyed in many cases a conscious attempt to reach citizenship rights, with a different profile from what had been sought from those who preceded them. A significant part left to obtain the social rights created in the Vargas Era, difficult to access in the countryside. However, even for the rural population, the struggle for access to citizens’ rights did not start in 1930.

It is curious to perceive that in the first generation born after slavery (or at times after the ‘free womb’ law), family labor occurred in parallel to the exercise of a citizenship expressed in the task of regularizing their landholding situation with the state, for which there was a desire to establish a link through the payment of taxes. Moreover, when the local ways for resolving problems were exhausted, the police were sought or their quarrels were judicialized – and

this was not done only by segments of the elite of the local population. Although forced recruitment indicated a posture alien to political issues, and soldiers could not vote, participation of a family member as a police inspector indicated everything but indifference in relation to state representation mechanisms.

The military apparatus was a mechanism available to the blacks of the region to seek participation in the state, but it also configured a form of access to land: as we have seen, the military project was a means for the peasant project in itself, a project which also had significant political implications. In summary, people – and not just the best situated – interacted with the state apparatus *through various channels established for this*. They were not mere sketches of citizens: it was sought to outline, define, and color their citizenship to the extent it was possible, with all the possible and available ink and pencils. Objective gains was aimed at, but also those symbolic ones resulting from “feeling like a Brazilian citizen” – and, thereby, removing themselves from the stain of captivity.

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NOTES

¹ Research financed by CNPq, Fapergs Capes, during the doctorate and post-doctoral internship in Unisinos.

² Letter provided by the granddaughter of Manoel Inácio, Aurora Inácia Marques da Silva. The Flexor dictionary of abbreviations registers Cid^m as an abbreviation of citizen. However, this book registers abbreviations from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, and this specifically refers to the 1700s and 1800s. It is possible that in the twentieth century this form of summarizing a word may have been altered, especially because it was an informal document and not an official one. Furthermore, it should be noted that the C, Ç, and S appear to be interchangeable, because city can be spelt as Cid^e, Çid^e and Sid^e (FLEXOR, 2008, p.87 and 382). Finally, the suffix *dão* is closer to the oral pronunciation than the spelling “d^m”.

³ According to the text of the law: “[p.7] The President of the State is authorized to a: [p.9] Article 5 – Charge taxes on rural properties, to the amount of 0.2% of their venal value and 10 rs. per hectare, carrying out the respective allotment during the first semester of the fiscal year and collecting the tax in the second. § Single paragraph – When the government starts to collect this tax it shall be obliged to abate from export taxes, at its judgment, the value equivalent to the amount budgeted for rural properties.” Arquivo Histórico do Rio Grande do Sul (hereafter AHRS), Livro 0636 de Legislação.

⁴ Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul (hereafter APERS), Cartório de Órfãos e Ausentes (hereafter COA) de Conceição do Arroio, estante 159, caixa 026.0306, auto n. 99, inventário de Isabel Maria Osório, ano de 1867.

⁵ APERS, COA de Conceição do Arroio, estante 159, caixa 027.0334, auto 789, inventário de Manoel Marques da Rosa, ano de 1913.

⁶ APERS, Cartório de Civil e Crime (hereafter CCC) – Comarca de Santo Antônio da Patrulha, termo de Osório, estante 114b, caixa 027.0293, auto 786, ano de 1928. Processo Crime: réus – André Marcelino Fortes e José Fortes, ofendida – Eliza Luiza Marques. Requerimento de Anacleto Bibiano Fortes.

⁷ Document belonging to the Fortes family, reproduced in BARCELLOS et al., 2004, p.474.

⁸ APERS, CCC – Comarca de Santo Antônio da Patrulha, termo de Osório, estante 114b, caixa 027.0293, Auto 786. Processo Crime: réus – André Marcelino Fortes e José Fortes, ofendida – Eliza Luiza Marques. Depoimento de Eliza Luiza Marques à Polícia, f. 8-8v e depoimento de Manoel Cipriano da Rosa, f. 32.

⁹ Criminal case against Esmeraldina Maria dos Santos, processo criminal n. 830, caixa 027.0297, Fundo: Comarca de Santo Antônio da Patrulha 1893-1957, Subfundo: Vara de Civil e Crime, Arquivo Público do Estado do Rio Grande do Sul. Behind the apparent banality of the case, it has to be taken into consideration that since the slavery period parasols and shoes functioned as symbols of distinctiveness (KOUTSOUKOS, 2009). Not just any artifact was broken by the aggressor.

¹⁰ For example, Mr. Manoel Francisco Antônio was eight during the 1930 Revolution, and remembers on this occasion of taking refuge in the forest with his relatives in order not to be obliged to serve in the military. Interview with Mr. Manoel Francisco Antônio on 16 Oct. 2010 in Osório (LABHOI-UFF).

¹¹ Interview with Ms. Edite Maria da Rosa on 10 Jun. 2010 in Ribeirão do Morro Alto (Laboratório de História Oral e Imagem – Universidade Federal Fluminense; hereafter LABHOI-UFF); Interview filmed with Ms. Eva Marques Correia on 12 Mar. 2010 in Caconde (LABHOI-UFF); Interview filmed with Ms. Diva Inácia Marques Terra on 12 Mar. 2010 in Osório (LABHOI-UFF); Interview filmed with Ms. Aurora Inácia Marques da Silva on 13 Mar. 2010 in Osório (LABHOI-UFF).

¹² Interview with Ms. Edite Maria da Rosa on 10 Jun. 2010 in Ribeirão do Morro Alto (LABHOI-UFF).

¹³ Expression proposed by BITTENCOURT JUNIOR, 2006, p.285.