

# INDEPENDENCE AND REVOLUTION: THEMES OF POLITICS, HISTORY AND VISUAL CULTURE

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## ABSTRACT

In order to collaborate with the questions suggested by the Forum “On the eve of the 200th anniversary of the Independence of Brazil: what and how to discuss?”, this paper seeks to address the central theme of the discussions, choosing the relations between politics, culture and historiography as an analytical axis. In the first part, it retrieves and unfolds arguments around the understanding of Independence as a theme of politics and as a revolutionary movement that guided the thinking and action of the protagonists who experienced the separation from Portugal and the formation of the Empire in the 19th century. In the second part, it seeks to articulate the political and historiographical debate developed during the 19th century and the emergence of visual representations and recreations of the theme, as well as the episodes and characters connected to it. The primary objective is to raise questions about the writings of history and visual narratives that still today populate the speech of historians and the imaginary of Brazilian society, in order to discover their foundations and the reasons for their persuasive strength.

## KEYWORDS

Independence history – policy – History writing – visual narratives.

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# INDEPENDÊNCIA E REVOLUÇÃO: TEMAS DA POLÍTICA, DA HISTÓRIA E DA CULTURA VISUAL

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## RESUMO

Visando colaborar com as questões sugeridas pelo fórum “Às vésperas dos 200 anos da Independência do Brasil: o que e como discutir?”, este artigo procura abordar o tema central das discussões elegendo como eixo analítico as relações entre política, cultura e historiografia. Na primeira parte, o texto recupera e desdobra argumentos em torno da compreensão da Independência como tema da política e como movimento revolucionário que pautou o pensamento e a ação dos protagonistas que vivenciaram a separação de Portugal e a formação do Império no século XIX. Na segunda parte, procura articular o debate político e historiográfico desenvolvido ao longo do século XIX e a emergência de representações e recriações visuais do tema, bem como dos episódios e personagens a ele conectados. O objetivo primordial é lançar interrogações sobre escritas da História e narrativas visuais que ainda hoje povoam a fala de historiadores e o imaginário da sociedade brasileira, visando descobrir seus fundamentos e as razões de sua força persuasiva.

## PALAVRAS-CHAVE

História da Independência – Escrita da História – política – narrativas visuais.

## Introduction

“... *The past is not free. It is governed, managed, preserved, explained, told, celebrated or hated. Whether it is celebrated or hidden, it remains a fundamental issue of the present. For this past, normally distant, more or less imagined, we are ready to fight ..... we erase it, forget it, put it ahead of other episodes, go back, rewrite history ...*”. Régine Robin<sup>3</sup>  
“... *The statement that we live in a time marked by the power of images - and vision as one of the fundamental meanings for the apprehension and decoding of the world around us has become commonplace ... What to see, when it seems that we can see everything by virtue of the means put at the service of writing history? How to reflect on this complex relationship between the visible and the invisible, which is at the very root of the historian's work, when the means of visibility of the past seem infinitely extended by the technical capacity of archiving the past? ...*” Manoel Luiz Salgado Guimarães<sup>4</sup>.

**I**nterpretations about the Independence of Brazil, bequeathed by the historiography produced between the 19th and mid 20th centuries, have undergone profound changes in the last thirty years. Concomitantly with the academic production resulting from research work developed within the scope of postgraduate programs in History throughout the country<sup>5</sup>, research groups were organized, following the example coordinated by István Jancsó in the 2000s<sup>6</sup>, which, bringing together scholars from different insti-

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3 ROBIN, Régine. *Saturated memory*. Trans. C. Dias & G. Costa. Campinas, Ed. da UNICAMP, 2016, p. 31.

4 GUIMARÃES, Manoel Luiz Salgado. Vendo o passado: representação e escrita da história. *Proceedings of the USP Paulista Museum*, vol. 15, n. 2, Jul/Dec, 2007, p. 11.

5 Consult, among others, the following works: BRESCIANI, Maria Stella & NAXARA (ORG). *Memória e (Res)sentimentos: indagações sobre uma questão sensível*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Campinas, Editora da UNICAMP, 2004; GUIMARÃES, Lucia Maria Paschoal & PRADO, Maria Emília (org). *O liberalismo no Brasil Imperial*. Rio de Janeiro, Revan/UERJ, 2001; CARVALHO, José Murilo (org). *Nação e cidadania no Império: novos horizontes*. Rio de Janeiro, Civilização Brasileira, 2007; RIBEIRO, Gladys Sabina (org). *Brasileiros e cidadãos: modernidade política, 1822/1930*. São Paulo, Alameda, 2008; GRINBERG, Keila & SALLES, Ricardo (org). *O Brasil Imperial, 1808/1889*. Rio de Janeiro, Civilização Brasileira, 2009, 3 vols.; MARSON, Izabel Andrade & OLIVEIRA, Cecilia Helena L. de Salles (org). *Monarquia, liberalismo e negócios no Brasil, 1780/1860*. São Paulo, EDUSP/CNPq/CAPES/Museu Paulista da USP, 2013.

6 This is the thematic project: *A fundação do Estado e da Nação brasileiros, 1750/1850*. São Paulo, FAPESP/ Universidade de São Paulo (IEB/MP)/Universidade Federal de São Paulo, 2000/2008. This collective work, which brought together researchers from several universities in the country, resulted

tutions, contributed enormously to expand, sophisticate and make more complex the questions raised about that historical period.

In the current stage of knowledge, the Independence of Brazil was detached from the “national memory/history”<sup>7</sup> that articulated it to cut-out episodes - such as the proclamation of September 7, 1822 - to fragmented characters and situations, and particularly, a restrictive understanding of the processes underway at the beginning of the 19th century, as it was associated with the chronological and symbolic framework of an “emancipation”<sup>8</sup> that little or almost nothing seemed to represent for society and politics at the time.

Despite the methodological and thematic diversity of the most recent contributions of historians dedicated to the period, it is possible to identify some assumptions of analysis that guide knowledge accumulated since at least the 1980s.

Research that discussed the emergence and unfolding of political and power projects distinct from the proposal of constitutional monarchy acquired relevance, identifying that both the monarchical option and the construction of an Empire in America, imposed themselves on other alternatives without them no longer mobilizing

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in the collections: JANCSÓ, István (org) *Brasil: formação do Estado e da nação*. São Paulo, FAPESP/HUCITEC, 2003; JANCSÓ, István (org). *Independência: história e historiografia*. São Paulo, FAPESP/HUCITEC, 2005; OLIVEIRA, Cecília H L de S; BITTENCOURT, Vera Lucia Nagib & COSTA, Wilma Peres(org). *Soberania e conflito: configurações do Estado Nacional no Brasil do século XIX*. São Paulo, Hucitec/FAPESP, 2010; BERBEL, Márcia; MARQUESE, Rafael & PARRON, Tâmis. *Escravidão e política. Brasil-Cuba, 1790/1850*. São Paulo, HUCITEC/FAPESP, 2010.

7 On the subject, see especially: NORA, Pierre. *Présent, nation, mémoire*. Paris, Gallimard, 2011.

8On the historical meanings of the expressions “emancipation” and “independence”, see: LYRA, Maria de Lourdes Viana. *Memória da Independência: marcos e representações simbólicas*. *Revista Brasileira de História*. São Paulo, ANPUH/Contexto, vol. 15, n. 29, 1995, p. 173-206; NEVES, Lucia Maria Bastos Pereira das. *Emancipação política*. In: VAINFAS, Ronaldo (dir). *Dicionário do Brasil Imperial, 1822/1889*. Rio de Janeiro, Objetiva, 2000, p. 225-228; OLIVEIRA, Cecilia Helena L. de Salles. *A Astúcia Liberal*. Market relations and political projects in Rio de Janeiro, 1820/1824. Bragança Paulista, EDUSF/Ícone, 1999.

segments of society in the years 1820 and 1830<sup>9</sup>. Exploring and disseminating documentary collections of a varied nature, such as periodicals, single publications, official and private correspondence, government decisions in Rio de Janeiro and other provinces, numerous studies revealed a spectrum of political proposals complex, nuanced and rooted in different segments of colonial society, breaking the interpretation that, at the time, social relations were based on binary oppositions simplifying the internal dynamics itself to that society<sup>10</sup>. Concomitantly with the evidence and analysis of political projects and their repercussions, the focus of attention shifted from the Court of Rio de Janeiro to other cities and provinces, which earned the space-territorial understanding of manifestations and claims that had long been subjected to a fixed look at Rio de Janeiro, as if the Court and the city that housed it could express the diversity and multiplicity of circumstances that had occurred, for example, in Belém, Salva-

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<sup>9</sup>See, among others: BASILE, Marcelo. *Ezequiel Correa dos Santos: um jacobino na Corte do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro, FGV, 2001; BASILE, Marcelo. *O império em construção: projetos de Brasil e ação política na Corte regencial*. Doctorate thesis. Rio de Janeiro, UFRJ, 2004; FONSECA, Sílvia Carla Pereira de Brito. *A ideia de República no Império do Brasil*: Rio de Janeiro e Pernambuco, 1824/1834. Doctorate thesis. Rio de Janeiro, UFRJ, 2004; BITTENCOURT, Vera Lucia Nagib. *De Alteza Real a Imperador*. O governo de D. Pedro, abril/1821-outubro/1822. Doctorate thesis. São Paulo, USP, 2007; OLIVEIRA, Carlos Eduardo França de. *Construtores do Império, defensores da província: São Paulo e Minas Gerais na formação do Estado nacional e de poderes locais, 1824/1834*. Porto Alegre, ANPUH/ Editora da PUC do RGS, 2017; ALVES, Walquiria de Rezende Tofanelli. *Expectativas para a “nação portuguesa” no contexto da Independência: o projeto de Joaquim José da Silva Maia, 1821/1823*. Master’s Thesis. Campinas, Unicamp/ Depto de História, 2018.

<sup>10</sup> See, among others, the papers of the collection *O Brasil Imperial*, organized by Keila Grinberg and Ricardo Salles, cited; NEVES, Lucia Maria Bastos Pereira das. *Corcundas e Constitucionais. A cultura política da Independência, 1820/1822*. Rio de Janeiro, Revan/FAPERJ, 2003; MOREL, Marco. *As transformações dos espaços públicos. Imprensa, atores políticos e sociabilidades na cidade imperial, 1820/1840*. São Paulo, HUCITEC, 2005; LEME, Marisa Saenz. *Soberania, centralização, federação e confederação no discurso jornalístico da Independência*. *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro*. Rio de Janeiro, n. 440, 2009, p. 25-45; CARVALHO, José Murilo; BASTOS, Lucia; BASILE, Marcelo (org). *Guerra literária*. Panfletos da Independência, 1820/1823. Belo Horizonte, UFMG, 2014, 4 volumes.

dor, Rio Grande de São Pedro or even in the regions of Montevideo and Buenos Aires<sup>11</sup>.

The recognition that Independence was the result of political struggles and the clash between simultaneous projects – although divergent with regard to the construction of the nation and the instances of power – also came from the development of investigations that, instead of favoring the place of the State and its organization, turned to economic production, labor relations and, notably, to the production and irradiation of culture and political culture<sup>12</sup>. Studies and reflections that, deeply questioning the “delay” and the apparent misfits between colonial society and the configuration of market relations, indicated, on the contrary, the compatibility between liberalism and slavery and the weight of the so-called “second slavery” in the movement of expansion of coffee production in the south-central and sugar production in the northeast, poles of support of political groups and pressure that ended up driving the configuration of the Empire and the monarchy in the first decades of the 1800s, deserve a special mention<sup>13</sup>.

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11 See, among others: the papers of the collection *Soberania e Conflito*, aforementioned; PIMENTA, João Paulo Garrido. *A Independência do Brasil e a experiência hispano-americana, 1808/1822*. São Paulo, HUCITEC, 2015; and PIMENTA, João Paulo Garrido. *Tempos e espaços das Independências. A inserção do Brasil no mundo ocidental, 1780/1830*. São Paulo, Intermeios/ PPGHS-USP, 2017.

12 See, among others: FERES JÚNIOR, João (org). *Léxico da história dos conceitos políticos no Brasil*. Belo Horizonte, UFMG, 2009; GUIMARÃES, Manoel Luiz Salgado. *Historiografia e nação no Brasil, 1837/1857*. Rio de Janeiro, EDUERJ, 2011; MOREL, Marco & FERREIRA, Tânia Maria Bessone (org). *História e imprensa: representações culturais e práticas de poder*. Rio de Janeiro, DP&A/FAPERJ, 2006; AZEVEDO, C; ROLLEMBERG, D; KNAUSS, P; BICALHO, M. F. & Quadrat, S (org). *Cultura política, memória e historiografia*. Rio de Janeiro, Editora da FGV, 2009; ABREU, M; SOIHET, R & GONTIJO, R. (org). *Cultura política e leituras do passado: historiografia e ensino de História*. Rio de Janeiro, Civilização Brasileira/FAPERJ, 2007.

13 On the subject, see, among others, the works of: FRANCO, Maria Sylvia de Carvalho. *Homens livres na ordem escravocrata*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. São Paulo, IEB/USP, 1968; TOMICH, Dale. *Pelo prisma da escravidão*. São Paulo, EDUSP, 2011; MARQUESE, Rafael de Bivar & SALLES, Ricardo (org). *Escravidão e capitalismo histórico no século XIX: Cuba, Brasil e Estados Unidos*. Rio de Janeiro, Civilização Brasileira, 2016.

It is also worth mentioning, in the formulation of the field of knowledge and assumptions in which the analyses on Independence are currently located, the studies on the cultural and conceptual universe shared by the protagonists of the separation of Portugal and the organization of the Empire. The range of works that addressed the press of the time and other forms of literary and artistic expression, such as the works edited by Tipografia Régia during the Johannine period and the production of the Academy of Fine Arts, brought to the debate concepts and forms of understanding that showed wide circulation and appropriation of ideas from both sides of the Atlantic, as well as the dissemination of references of political thought and action that found their main focuses in the rest of America. In this context too, what the most recent studies indicate is the opposite of possible incompatibilities. The characters who acted in that period used, transformed and reinterpreted - according to interests, immediate needs and long-term projects - arguments, metaphors and premises that were part of the speeches and narratives of the time, and that formed unprecedented experiences in the European and American continents and functioning of constitutional and representative governments<sup>14</sup>.

In this sense, the disconnection of Independence from a singular event, made it possible to recover its dimension as political theme, treated exhaustively within the different constituent parts of the then Portuguese Empire, especially from the second half of the 18th century<sup>15</sup>. In addition, the understanding of the impossibility of investigating Independence outside the horizons of the liberal revo-

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14 See, among others, the collection *Monarquia, liberalismo e negócios no Brasil, 1780/1860*, aforementioned; COSTA, Wilma Peres. Entre tempos e mundos: Chateaubriand e a outra América. *Almanack*. Unifesp, vol. 11, 2010, p. 1-21; BARBOSA, Silvana Mota et al (org). *Estudos de história e política no segundo reinado*. Juiz de Fora, Clio, 2018; BARBOSA, Silvana Mota, BARATA, Alexandre & MARTINS, Maria Fernanda (org). *Dos poderes do Império: cultura política, redes sociais e relações de poder no Brasil do século XIX*. Juiz de Fora, Editora da Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, 2014; SLEMIAN, Andrea. *Sob o império das leis*. São Paulo, HUCITEC, 2009.

15 Consult, especially: LYRA, Maria de Lourdes Viana. *A utopia do poderoso império*. Rio de Janeiro, Sette Letras, 1994.



lutions that occurred in the late eighteenth century and in the nineteenth century in both Europe and America gained strength<sup>16</sup>. That is to say, the separatist movement integrates the political, social and cultural processes that resulted in the formation of nations and national states in the western world, which not only brings the events that occurred in Portuguese America closer to other contemporary experiences, but also causes the resizing of aspects and problems that made them unique.

In this sense, there are two main objectives of this paper. On the one hand, to resume the debate on the links between the Independence movement and the character of revolution attributed to it by politicians and historians, particularly in the nineteenth century. On the other hand, to cast questions about the mediations that intertwined the Independence revolution, recorded in writings of diverse nature during the 1800s, and their artistic and visual representations, projected on engravings, sculptures and historical painting from that same period.

## *Independence and revolution*

According to Duby, “sensational events”<sup>17</sup> - like the arrival of the Portuguese Court in the city of Rio de Janeiro in 1808; the creation of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves in 1815; the officialization of the rupture between the Kingdoms of Brazil and Portugal in 1822; the granting of the Constitutional Charter of the Empire in 1824; and the Abdication of D. Pedro I in 1831 – can be in-

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16 See the papers in the collections organized by István Jancsó, aforementioned, as well as: GUERRA, François-Xavier. *Modernidad e Independencias*. Ensayos sobre las revoluciones hispánicas. Madrid, Mapfre, 1992; CHIARAMONT, José Carlos. *Nación Y Estado em Iberoamerica*. El lenguaje político en tiempos de las Independencias. Buenos Aires, Sudamericana, 2004; PIMENTA, João Paulo Garrido. A Independência do Brasil como revolução: história e atualidade de um tema clássico. *História da Historiografia*, vol. 3, 2009, p. 53-82; MARSON, Izabel Andrade & OLIVEIRA, Cecilia Helena L. de Salles. Introduction. In: *Ob.cit.*, p. 9-36.

17 DUBY, Georges. *O domingo de Bouvines: 27 de julho de 1214*. Trans. Maria Cristina Frias. Rio de Janeiro, Paz e Terra, 1993, p. 10.



valuable in understanding the historical circumstances in which they were evident. The great repercussion they have acquired, due to the “impressions of witnesses”, the “illusions of historians” and the “torrent of discourses” and versions that surround them<sup>18</sup>, invites them to problematize them and to seek in their traces and remains the most comprehensive and profound movements of which were striking expression. It also invites us to remember, according to the same historian, that events are manufactured and immortalized through a complex, “rarely innocent game, of memory and forgetfulness”.<sup>19</sup>

As I had the opportunity to comment on another occasion,

*“... particularly the years 1822 and 1831, were recorded by different historical subjects, despite the singular proposals for which they fought, as moments of a revolution that engendered the secession of the parties that made up the Empire Portuguese and the concomitant emergence of a new sovereign political entity, based on constitutional monarchical government and called empire of Brazil. These conditions were interpreted as demonstrating the independence of society and its design as a nation, comparable to the others”<sup>20</sup>.*

Given the association between *independence*, separation of Portugal and the date of September 7, 1822, repeated and naturalized in a recurrent way by the most diverse media outlets, it is not always possible to pay attention to the specific meanings that the word received at the beginning of the 19th century. Nor is it considered that the *independence* of a society is a set of historical and political conditions that are not confused with a single event, such as the proclamation on the banks of the Ipiranga, in São Paulo, although over time it has

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18 *Idem, ibidem*, p. 10-12.

19 *Idem, ibidem*, p. 12.

20 OLIVEIRA, Cecilia Helena de Salles. Repercussões da revolução: delineamento do império do Brasil, 1808/1831. In: GRINBERG, Keila & SALLES, Ricardo (org). *O Brasil Imperial*. Rio de Janeiro, Civilização Brasileira, 2009, vol. 1, p. 18. Part of the arguments I present in this first item of the paper are based on this study.

been cut out to fulfill the role of emblem of the beginning of a new era<sup>21</sup>.

The term *independence* acquired resonance in the political vocabulary especially from the outbreak of the Revolution of 1820, in the city of Porto. It was widely used in revolutionary manifestos to underline the possibility of the “*Portuguese nation*” and the “*Portuguese of both worlds*” to regenerate the traditional monarchical principles of the Kingdom, established in the seventeenth century with the rise of D. João IV of Braganza<sup>22</sup>. The fundamental proposal was to build “*national independence*” by articulating the monarchy to a Constitution that would set limits on royal power and guarantee civil and political rights and freedoms to the citizens of the Empire. It was intended, by this way, among other requirements, to challenge the absolutism represented by D. João VI and the “*despotism*”<sup>23</sup> exercised by ministers, counselors and the Court based in Rio de Janeiro, since 1808.

In this conception is that the word *independence* was initially conveyed by significant segments of colonial society predisposed to support the claims of the liberal vintintas and to promote profound internal transformation to the Kingdoms of Brazil and Portugal. The expression appeared, in 1821, in periodicals in Rio de Janeiro and

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21 On the definition of the date of September 7 as a milestone in the history of Brazil, see: OLIVEIRA, Cecilia Helena de Salles. *7 de setembro de 1822*. São Paulo, Lazuli/ Companhia Editora Nacional, 2005; OLIVEIRA, Cecilia Helena de Salles & PEIXOTO, Denise. *Dimensões da Independência*. CD Rom. São Paulo, Museu Paulista/Pró-Reitoria de Graduação da USP, 2004.

22 See, especially, Manifesto da nação portuguesa aos soberanos e povos da Europa, dado em Lisboa a 15 de setembro de 1820. In: MACEDO, Roberto. *História administrativa do Brasil*. São Paulo, DASP, 1964, vol. VI, parte VIII, p. 202-215.

23 The expression “despotism” was used, both in Portugal and in the provinces of Brazil at that time, to designate the form of government in which the monarch and the captains-general, even acting in accordance with the laws in effect, monopolized the decisions, making it impossible for citizens to participate and to know the means by which public business was managed. See: ARENDT, Hannah. *Da Revolução*. São Paulo, Ática; Brasília, UnB, 1988, cap. 3; BOBBIO, Norberto. Despotismo. In: BOBBIO, N., MATTEUCCI, N. & PASQUINO, G (org). *Dicionário de Política*. 12th Edition. Trans. Carmen C. Varriale et al. Brasília, UnB, 1999, 1º vol., p. 339-ss.

other provinces, such as Bahia<sup>24</sup>, inextricably intertwined with the construction of a new space for the exercise of political power, expressing the project of a representative government that was capable of promoting and ensuring the inalienable rights to life, liberty and property, as well as sustaining the recomposition of the “*Portuguese nation*” and the unity of the Empire, frayed in the face of European wars, market disputes involving warring nations such as Britain and France, and the economic and political changes caused by the reorganization of the monarchy’s headquarters in America.

Thus, *independence* was a word of mobilization that was opposed to “*political slavery*”<sup>25</sup>, a situation proper to absolutism, marking the moment when by voluntary consent free men united to establish ci-

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24 I refer specifically to the periodicals *Revêrbero Constitucional Fluminense* (September/1821 – October/1822) and *Idade d’Ouro do Brasil*, edited in Bahia, since 1811. It is worth mentioning, however, that there were numerous periodic or loose publications that revived the political debate at the time and that, due to the richness and nuance of positions, make it possible to reconstruct the complex universe of ideas, proposals and interests involved in the intense political movement. On the subject, consult, in addition to the works of Lúcia Bastos, Cecilia Helena de Salles Oliveira and Walquiria Tofanelli Alves, aforementioned, the works of: SILVA, Maria Beatriz Nizza da. *A primeira gazeta da Bahia: Idade d’Ouro do Brasil*. São Paulo, Cultrix, 1978; and MOREL, Marco. *As transformações dos espaços públicos*. Imprensa, atores políticos e sociabilidades na cidade imperial (1820/1840). São Paulo, Hucitec, 2006. In the specific case of the province of Pernambuco, the discussion about the incompatibility between *despotism* and *independence* had been taking place since at least 1817. In addition, both in Recife and elsewhere, the experience accumulated with the organization and performance of Government Boards, since 1821, has given other features to the debate on the meaning and operationalization of constitutional governments. See regarding this: BERNARDES, Denis Antonio de Mendonça. *O patriotismo constitucional: Pernambuco, 1820/1822*. São Paulo, Hucitec/FAPESP/UFPE, 2006.

25 The expression refers to the reflections of John Locke in the seventeenth century and referred to the submission of the free man to any arbitrary and absolute power. According to the thinker, freedom should be submitted exclusively to the legislative power, established by the consent of society. In this sense, slavery and slave labor were different situations. The practice of selling men for the exploitation of labor was seen as “natural” and commonplace, having nothing to do with submission to the fickle and uncertain will of a ruler. See: Segundo tratado sobre o governo. In: *Locke*. Coleção Os Pensadores. Trans. F J Monteiro. São Paulo, Abril, 1973, vol. XVIII, p. 49-50. On the subject consult the paper by Maria Sylvia de Carvalho Franco All world was America. *Revista USP*, n. 17. São Paulo, USP, 1993, 31-53. See also the work of Hannah Arendt, aforementioned, especially the first two chapters.

vil society, concentrating in their hands the sovereign power to draft laws and to choose the authorities who would be responsible for executing them. Thus, it referred to the practice of citizenship in terms conceived by the protagonists of the American Revolution and the French Revolution, representing the condition by which free men owners, with different degrees of fortune and position, considered themselves able to manage their own destiny, managing and exploiting the natural resources of the territory and defining the form of government that should govern the relations between the members of society<sup>26</sup>.

Understood in this way, at the beginning of the 19th century, *independence* was not confused with emancipation and administrative autonomy, despite this identification being accentuated during the course of the century. As Maria de Lourdes Viana Lyra observed, the emancipation of the colony was an issue discussed since the reformist programs elaborated by D. Rodrigo de Souza Coutinho at the end of the 18th century<sup>27</sup>. The transfer of the Portuguese monarchy headquarters to Rio de Janeiro and the subsequent elevation of Brazil to the status of Kingdom were considered, by different interlocutors of the political game in America, between 1821 and 1822, as the recognition, in fact and in law, of the autonomy of the various parts of the territory, understanding that the Kingdom was not only autonomous but occupied status equal to that of Portugal.

On the other hand, this understanding implied the possibility that *independence* could be achieved without breaking ties with Portugal, since, at least in the first movements of revolutionaries in the city of Porto, Lisbon as well as in the provinces of Brazil, what was on the agenda was not the separation between the parts of the then Portu-

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26 It was Thomas Paine's phrase that emblematically defines the expression: "... *independence means: we will make our laws*", withdrawing from the king – and, in this case, the English parliament – this agency. See: PAINE, Thomas. Senso Comum. In: *Federalistas*. Coleção Os Pensadores. Trans. A Della Nina. São Paulo, Abril, 1973, p.69.

27 LYRA, Maria de Lourdes Viana. *A utopia do poderoso Império*. Portugal e Brasil: bastidores da política, 1798/1822. Rio de Janeiro, Sette Letras, 1994, p. 131-ss.

guese Empire, but, above all, the organization of a constitutional and representative government that would redefine not only the exercise of power, but the political and economic ties between the provinces of Brazil, the Court in Rio de Janeiro, the Kingdom of Portugal and the other Portuguese domains in Asia and especially in Africa.

It was during the political struggle movement, between 1821 and 1822, that the association between *independence* and separation from Portugal was forged, without, however, the term losing its original character. The inconsistencies evidenced between interests and demands of deputies from Portugal and deputies from the provinces of Brazil, in the debates in Lisbon, pointed to the impossibility of re-composing a Portuguese Empire in constitutional molds. At the same time, hard-fought negotiations between government officials based in Rio de Janeiro and provincial leaders from São Paulo, Minas Gerais, Pernambuco and Bahia paved the way for the decision to break up with Portugal to gain support, without any consensus on this option, nor about the authority of the Prince and the monarchical project he seemed to represent<sup>28</sup>. It should be noted that, due to the publicity of multiple proposals, the mismatches and mismatches between events taking place in Portugal, in the provinces and in the Court of Rio de Janeiro, the historical and political circumstances were, in the 1820s, profoundly fluid and indeterminate, which raises the question of recurrent interpretations even today as those that articulate Independence to confrontations between colony and metropolis or those that seek to aggrandize conservatism and the character of “*emancipation*” that would have guided the course of the process<sup>29</sup>.

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28 Arguments and inferences that support these observations can be found in the books *A Astúcia Liberal* and *A utopia do poder* Império, aforementioned, as well as in the following studies: SOUZA, Iara Lis Carvalho. *Pátria coroada*. O Brasil como corpo político autônomo, 1780/1831. São Paulo, UNESP, 1999; JANCÓS, István (org). *Brasil: formação do Estado e da nação*. São Paulo, Hucitec/FAPEESP, 2003; JANCÓS, Istvá (org). *Independência: História e Historiografia*. São Paulo, Hucitec/FAPEESP, 2005; BITTENCOURT, Vera Lúcia Nagib. *De Alteza Real a Imperador*. O governo do Príncipe D. Pedro, abril/1821-outubro/1822. Doctorate thesis. São Paulo, FFLCH/USP, 2007.

29 Check out the aforementioned works of Carlos Eduardo França de Oliveira and Cecilia Helena de Salles Oliveira. See, also, the recent Habilitation thesis by Marisa Saenz Leme entitled *Monopólios*

Instead of immediately identifying the separation and a single fragmentary event located in time and space, *independence* was projected as the construction of a political work in which the liberation of oppressions and colonial restrictions and the Old Regime was accompanied by the breaking of the monopoly of real power and the effective participation of those who considered themselves citizens in public affairs, which would be the guarantee of political freedom.

As Hannah Arendt noted, the revolutions of the 18th century, and in particular the American Revolution, began as if they were restorations of conditions and rights lost or usurped due to agency and abuse of power. What made them unique was, above all, the experience of a new beginning and the realization that “*freedom and liberation are not the same thing; that liberation may be the condition of freedom, but that it does not automatically lead to it; ... and that the true content of freedom means admission to the world of politics*”.<sup>30</sup>

The analysis made by the philosopher about the events in English America, in the late 18th century, makes possible, “*the clarification of affinities between objectives, strategies and conceptions existing among citizens who committed themselves to a project of independence in the United States and in Brazil*”<sup>31</sup>, expanding and complicating the situation in which events and characters are located, between 1808 and 1831. In particular, I underline “*the conviction that the problem they were discussing was not preferably of a social order, but political, as it favored not a change in the existing order in society, but the choice of the government regime*”<sup>32</sup>, empha-

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*fiscal e da violência nos projetos de Estado no Brasil independente: um contraponto entre imprensa “liberal radical” e “liberal moderada”*. Franca, UNESP, 2020.

30 ARENDT, Hannah. *Ob.cit.*, p. 24-26. On the subject see, also: PASQUINO, Gianfranco. *Revolução*. In: BOBBIO, N., MATTEUCCI, N. & PASQUINO, G (org). *Dicionário de Política*. 12<sup>th</sup> Edition. Trans. Carmen C. Varriale et al. Brasília, UnB, 1999, 2<sup>o</sup>. vol., p. 1121-ss.

31 MARSON, Izabel Andrade. Hannah Arendt e a revolução: ressonâncias da revolução americana no Império brasileiro. In: MAGALHÃES, Marion Brepohl, LOPREATO, Christina & DUARTE, André (org). *A banalização da violência: a atualidade do pensamento de Hannah Arendt*. Rio de Janeiro, Relume-Dumará, 2004, p. 228.

32 *Idem, ibidem*, p. 229.

sizing that the revolution consisted in the struggle against political tyranny and oppression. In addition, in both English and Portuguese America, the debate sought to escape the link between revolution, violence and the action of “crowds”, associated with the free poor population and slaves, considering that the rebellions would be a stage to be overcome by the organization of constituent assemblies and the promulgation of constitutions, capable of delimiting the spaces and conditions for the exercise of the policy<sup>33</sup>.

Arendt’s arguments help to illuminate the understanding not only of the presence of the theme of revolution in the history and historiography of the Empire<sup>34</sup> but also “*the diverse experiences*” that stirred “*the hearts of the brave Brazilian people*” in the 1820s, in which the constitution of a new independent political body was associated with a revolution.<sup>35</sup>

It could be asked, then, how the protagonists of independence and the design of the Empire in the first decades of the 19th century described and gave meaning to what they called *revolution*. What would be the fundamentals and designs of this movement?

Despite Reinhart Koselleck commenting that, since the second half of the 18th century, the term *revolution* had become a “buzzword”, being used by the illuminists to describe everything that was seen from the perspective of transformation and from the commotion, the presence of this more general sense coexisted in the political discourse with what the same historian called “*new horizon of expectation*”: after the events in English America and France, “*the revolution leads to such a future unknown point, that getting to know it and mastering it has become an ongoing task of politics*”. Thus, this experience of accelerating

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33 *Idem, ibidem*, p. 229.

34 MARSON, Izabel Andrade. *Política, história e método em Joaquim Nabuco: tessituras da revolução e da escravidão*. Uberlândia, Editora da UFU, 2008, cap. 1.

35 MATTOS, Ilmar. Construtores e herdeiros. A trama dos interesses na construção da unidade política. *Revista Eletrônica Almanack Braziliense*. N. 1, May 2005, p.2-3. [www.almanack.usp.br](http://www.almanack.usp.br)



time and social upheaval also acquired the status of concept, “a regulatory principle for both the knowledge and the action of all men involved”.<sup>36</sup>

As Stella Bresciani and Vavy Pacheco Borges pondered, since the 18th century, *revolution* and also *reform* appeared simultaneously in the political debate as alternatives to the demands for a society of rights guaranteed by the letter of the law. “The utopia/nightmare of an upside-down world” has been present in political struggles since then, proving to be unviable to undo the relations between analyzes of the social, its movements and conflicts, as well as the intimate articulation between history and power<sup>37</sup>. In addition, the word *revolution*, throughout the ongoing confrontations in the first half of the nineteenth century, proved to be surrounded by ambiguities. It could be associated with civil war, thus representing the adversary’s physical and moral denial, but it was also seen as a limit alternative to preserve conquered or to be conquered rights and freedoms. In the debate between disparate proposals, it could be a crime for some or a legitimate right for others, highlighting the ways in which the theme and its appropriations - as happened with the theme of independence - underwent different evaluations: now positive, as resistance armed to oppression in the defense of constitutional freedoms and guarantees, now negative when associated with violence and destruction<sup>38</sup>. For the sectors of Rio de Janeiro and the center-south that were committed to the separation of Portugal and the construction of a monarchy led by Bragança, the *revolution* as a mobilization contrary to the policy of the Cortes in Lisbon was necessary and unavoidable, but it became irrational and condemnable when the armed resistance tur-

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36 KOSELLECK, Reinhart. *Futuro passado*. Contribuição à semântica dos tempos históricos. Trans. W P Maas and C A Pereira. Rio de Janeiro, Contraponto/ PUC-RJ, 2006, p. 67-69.

37 BRESCIANI, Stella & BORGES, Vavy Pacheco. Apresentação. Dossiê Reforma e Revolução. *Revista Brasileira de História*. São Paulo, ANPUH, vol. 10, n. 20, Mar/Aug, 1991, p. 7-8. More recently, the theme of the revolution was addressed by: PIMENTA, João Paulo Garrido. A independência do Brasil como uma revolução: história e atualidade de um tema clássico. *História da Historiografia*, UFOP, n.3, September/2009, p. 53-82.

38 MARSON, Izabel. Entre a “vertigem” e a razão: representações Da revolução na política pernambucana, 1838/1850. *Revista Brasileira de História*, v. 10, n. 20, mar/ag. 1991, p. 173-210.

ned against the authority of D. Pedro and the Court of Rio do Janeiro at the very moment of the separatist declaration and then during the first reign.

The theme of the revolution and the controversies surrounding it are exemplarily exposed in the work of José da Silva Lisboa, *História dos principais sucessos do Império do Brasil*<sup>39</sup>. There, a bloody revolution, similar to the terror of the French Revolution, was underway in Portugal and which the Courts gathered in Lisbon were leading and a positive and legitimate revolution that would have occurred in Brazil, between 1808 and 1822, led primarily by D. João VI and later by D. Pedro, which resulted in the separation between the two Kingdoms and the configuration of an Empire in America. It was not a question of emancipation, as this would have been ensured since 1808 and, notably, with the elevation of Brazil to the status of a Kingdom, equivalent to Portugal.

*“... The year 1821 began in Brazil with the opening of a new political scene, which was the origin of the establishment of the Constitutional Government, which ... resulted in the first Empire of America ... February 26, sets the most memorable time in Brazil, due to the great success ... when ... D. João VI approved the new political order of Portugal ... and especially due to the presence of the Royal Prince in the State Government to direct the Revolution in Rio de Janeiro that was unfailingly bursting by machinations of Demagogues and resolution of the Military ... It is said that the Crown heir ... had the good sense to recognize that it was vain and dangerous not to follow the spirit of the century, that the legislation and administration of the monarchy required revision and reform, ... which in good reason was to be expected that, by meeting in the Lisbon Courts the Deputies of Portugal and Brazil, the pitfalls that experience had shown in such changes in fundamental laws of ancient States were avoided, and that the organic and regulatory laws would be made, the most convenient to the interests and circumstances of both countries ... ”*<sup>40</sup>

39 LISBOA, José da Silva. *História dos principais sucessos do Império do Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro, Tipografia Imperial/Nacional, 1827/1830. Acervo Biblioteca Nacional. I analyzed in detail the work of Silva Lisboa in the paper *Repercussões da revolução* [Repercussions of the revolution], published in the collection organized by Keila Grinberg and Ricardo Salles, already mentioned.

40 LISBOA, José da Silva. *Ob.cit*, Section I, Chap. XI.

However, the author pondered,

*“... the successes that have come have frustrated Royal hope; this being the cause of the despotic acts of the Courts, who remained committed to destroying all the bonds of fraternity of the inhabitants of the State Father and Son ... [of Recolonization] that stripped the Prince and Brazil of all the Honors that the Monarch had conferred on them, thus erecting a wall of Separation, wider than that of China, between co-brother countries ... ”*<sup>41</sup>

From that point on, when the Courts in Lisbon were entirely responsible for the rupture, the chronicle of the “*revolution of Independence*” merges with the movement to define the figure of D. Pedro as a great articulator of the unification of the provinces and constitutional monarchists around the foundation of an Empire in Brazil. Comparing the Prince to Julius Caesar, Lisbon resorted to the history of the Roman Consul to ponder that “*nature and fortune*” had given both “*the greatest and the best thing they could do for the good of many ... the power and the desire*”.<sup>42</sup> Concomitantly, the profile of the dissenters and those resistant to D. Pedro’s decisions is outlined. Politically disqualified, they were described as isolated rebels, mere sellers of illusions, whose practice contradicted the word, because instead of regenerating the monarchy they intended to destroy it and with it all legitimate protections to civil liberties. Probably taking inspiration from Benjamin Constant and the division he established between the freedom of the ancient and that of the modern<sup>43</sup>, Lisbon accused D. Pedro’s oppo-

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41 LISBOA, José da Silva. *Ob.cit.*, Section I, Chap. XI; P. 148-ss.

42 *Idem, ibidem*, Section I, p. 175.

43 Written in 1819, Constant’s reflections entitled “*Da liberdade dos antigos comparada com a dos modernos*” [About the freedom of the ancients compared to that of the modern ones] propose that, among Greeks and Romans, the enjoyment of freedom was related to participation in political power, differentiating from the freedom of moderns who he resided, in his view, in private independence. Thus, he observed “... *the aim of the ancients was that social power be shared among all citizens of the same country. This was what they called freedom. The objective of the modern is security in private activities, and they designate the guarantees that the institutions guarantee for that as freedom...*”. Refer to: MANENT, Pierre (dir). *Les Liberaux*. Paris, Hachette, 1986, 2 vol, p. 72-ss. On Constant’s work, see also Modesto Florenzano’s paper, Da força atual do pensamento de

nents of defending ideas displaced from his time and propagating the “*anarchy*”, trying to convince the “*people*” to support principles incompatible with the degree of “*civilization*” of society, which would justify the imposition of restrictions on participation in the world of politics. He designated them “*demagogues*”, equating Portuguese Republicans and deputies in the Courts. In this case, however, the criticisms were more forceful, because, in addition to revolutionaries “*foolish*” they had dared “*to recolonize*” Brazil, to make time go back and annihilate the autonomy of the Kingdom, symbolized in the person of the Prince and in the presence of a power center established in Rio de Janeiro.

*“... It can be rightly said that September 7, 1822 fixes the 1st maximum time of the Anais do Brasil and Annals of the Society for the Act of the Prince Regent in which he gave a great blow to the Courts of Lisbon, annihilating his arrogant Sovereignty over Brazil, declaring the total Independence of the Brazilian Nation. For this act, a free State arose in Southern America, in the region of Cruzeiro, as out of chaos .... This vast State could no longer give the World the Spectacle of servile submission to the Revolutionary and Tyrannical Government of Portugal, that, with almost the entire American continent emancipated, still persisted in recolonizing a country that felt its strength, and had Honor and Valor to overcome oppressors .... October 12th of 1822 completed the destiny of Brazil. ..Thus, the Great Work of the Establishment of the First Constitutional Empire in America was consummated, which will probably be the Standard Exemplary of similar political establishments in the New World, because it brings together the advantages of all regular forms of government, preventing the excesses of Democracy, Aristocracy and Monarchy ... This act was of Unanimous Acclamation of the Peoples of Brazil, as in the Court of Rio de Janeiro were citizens of all the Provinces of the Land of Santa Cruz .... ”<sup>44</sup> .*

Contrary to this interpretation, John Armitage traced another path for the “*revolution of Independence*”, in which the main protago-

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Benjamin Constant e da necessidade de reconhecê-lo [About the current strength of thought of Benjamin Constant and the need to acknowledge it]. *Revista de História*. São Paulo, Humanitas/FFLCH/USP, n.145, 2001, p. 167-180.

44 LISBOA, José da Silva. *Ob.cit*, Section I, Chap. XI and XII, p. 52-ss.

nists were the Brazilian citizens<sup>45</sup>. Particularly between 1822 and 1831, a “*revolution*” would have unfolded, which not only represented the political separation of Portugal, but the progressive abandonment of “*backward*” and “*absolutists*” practices that the Portuguese had left as inheritance, rejected by the “*free people of the land*” when he supported the movement against the first Emperor. For Armitage,

*“no matter how unworthy the agents employed in the revolution [in 1831], it must be recognized that it was the only way to establish the throne in the D. Pedro dynasty, and to prevent civil war, which would only have ended by the separation of the provinces. D. Pedro was not a tyrant ... but his mistakes were large and varied. Endowed with natural talent, but without prudence; admirer of the representative form of government in perspective, but always moving away from its practical execution; energetic, but fickle; he was closer to undertaking the liberation of Brazil, than to direct the subsequent march of the government ”.*<sup>46</sup>

Thus, the “*independence revolution*” was presented as a set of transformations that, if they were linked to the transfer of the headquarters of the Portuguese monarchy to Rio de Janeiro, in 1808, did not result directly from this event. On the contrary, it represented a break with previous practices and situations, be it in terms of administration, laws, customs and the economic situation of the former colony or in terms of the people and groups that exercised political power. Thus, also in this interpretation, the declaration of independence could not be confused with emancipation and indicated the configuration of another political order, underlining, in this case, the principles of constitutionalism and citizens’ representativeness. But, to build it, according to the author, it was necessary to break the traditions, first in relation to the European Kingdom and the Courts gathered in Lisbon and, later, expelling the Portuguese Emperor. The proclamation

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45 ARMITAGE, John. *História do Brasil desde a chegada da família de Bragança, em 1808, até a abdicação de d. Pedro I, em 1831*. São Paulo/Belo Horizonte, EDUSP/Itatiaia, 1981; 1<sup>st</sup> edition, 1837. I analyzed the work of Armitage in the paper *Repercussões da revolução* [Repercussions of the revolution], published in the collection organized by Keila Grinberg and Ricardo Salles, already mentioned.

46 *Idem, ibidem*, p. 226.

of independence represented a step to be taken in order for the other changes necessary for “*progress*” to occur. The “*patriots*”, in 1822, promoted the breaking of ties with Portugal and faced the construction of the bases of a sovereign power that would establish the integrity of the territory and, at the same time, prevent external aggressions and the outbreak of a “*bloody and lasting war*”, given the presence of republican proposals. The monarchy, embodied in the figure of D. Pedro, was the means found to:

*“... preserve Brazil from an even more fatal anarchy than that which had plagued the former Spanish colonies ... Although there were no privileged orders invested with interests opposed to those of society, the mass of the population was entirely incapable for the exercise of political power. While the advantages of representative government are great in the abstract, experience has shown that it can only be established on a permanent basis within peace, and in a state of advanced illustration of society; and even in the cases in which they contribute their own elements to be founded, the same complication is a serious obstacle to its adoption; moreover, it takes a long time before the losses born from the absolute regime can be overcome. If the transition in Brazil had been more violent, its stability would have endangered. The regime to which the people were accustomed was the monarchist, and this was the most appropriate instrument for the introduction of the missing civilization, and for adopting the social improvements that form an inherent and essential part of the representative system ...”<sup>47</sup> .*

The way in which Armitage narrated the historical circumstances is based on the recognition of the emergence and tangibility of the nation, in the first decades of the 19th century, pointing also to the nuance, autonomy and ability to mobilize the historical subjects who were involved in that political process and that through it citizens of the Empire were constituted. In this sense, his work exemplifies the projection of a memory from the period that opposes the version consecrated by Silva Lisboa.

The central point of the divergence is not in the certainty of the appearance of the nation, with which Cairu agreed, but in the way of catching the dynamics of society and in the content attributed to

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47 *Idem, ibidem*, p. 227.

the revolution and its protagonists. Lisbon magnified the State and the Bragança as agents of the revolution, even admitting the presence and performance of opposing groups, which suggests fissures in the monolithic and linear appearance attributed to the actions of the Portuguese Crown and later of the Crown Prince. On the other hand, Armitage described a trajectory in which nation and state appear as complementary entities, since one depends on the other to externalize itself, but at the same time they deny themselves, since now it is the nation that seeks to revolutionize the State, as in 1822 and 1831, it is now the State that limits and constrains the national collectivity, as in the episodes of 1823 and 1824, specifically the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly by armed force and the repression of the Confederation of Ecuador, in Pernambuco. The “*Independence revolution*” was necessary and positive for him, either because it placed the old colony in the wake of “*progress*” or because it prevented the fraying of society.

Cairu and Armitage’s interpretations were engineered at different historical moments and by measuring different social places. Both, however, demonstrate the complexity of the circumstances and an intricate network of actors and proposals, highlighting, above all, the ambiguities of the “*revolution*” in its course and in the ways of describing it and fixing it as history and memory.

A study on the historiography of Independence reveals how much these interpretations influenced and guided countless other works that became a reference in the study of the formation of the Empire, even those that, like those formulated by Varnhagen, Oliveira Lima and Afonso Taunay, nuanced or questioned the revolutionary character of the movement, highlighting the links between Independence and emancipation, as well as translating the process of separation as a natural evolution<sup>48</sup>. However, the written narrative and the imagery

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48 VARNHAGEN, Francisco Adolfo de. *História da Independência do Brasil*. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. São Paulo, Melhoramentos, s/d (1<sup>st</sup> edition 1916); LIMA, Manuel de Oliveira. *Formação histórica da nacionalidade brasileira*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Rio de Janeiro, TOPBOOKS/São Paulo, Publifolha, 2000. (1<sup>st</sup> edition 1911); LIMA, Manuel de Oliveira. *O movimento de Independência, 1821/1822*. São Paulo, Melhoramentos,



generated by figures of speech present in texts of various characteristics and historicities are added to the immense production of visual representations that, until very recently, were seen as mirrors of the “reality” in which the nation was taking shape.

What links could be established between the construction of knowledge about the history of Independence and the creation of visual representations about this history and the society that led it? What place did these representations take, especially those that were idealized in the 19th century and in the first half of the 20th century, in the construction and irradiation of political and historiographic assumptions that still guide many of the versions on the theme of Independence today? I am not only referring to the best known and reproduced works, such as the panel of Pedro Américo<sup>49</sup>, but to numerous engravings, paintings and portraits that, throughout the nineteenth century and notably on the occasion of the Centenary, in 1922, were shaping and giving consistency to the national pantheon of proceres of Independence and statesmen of the Empire<sup>50</sup>. To what

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1922; TAUNAY, Afonso d' Escragno. *Grandes vultos da Independência Brasileira*. São Paulo, Melhoramentos, 1922. A review of the historiography on Independence has indicated that, since the 1840s, the understanding of the separation of Portugal as a revolutionary movement started to coexist with other forms of classification of that moment in the past: emancipation, social evolution and natural development of a nation compared to a living being. This is an issue that I intend to deepen, simultaneously, with the research and analysis of visual representations on the theme.

49 “Independência ou Morte” [Independence or Death], 1888. The panel was specifically designed to adorn the noble hall of the Ipiranga Monument, erected in the city of São Paulo, between 1885 and 1890, to celebrate the proclamation of 1822 and the figure of the founder of the Empire, Pedro I. On the subject, consult: OLIVEIRA, Cecilia Helena de Salles & VALLADÃO, Claudia (org). *O brado do Ipiranga*. São Paulo, EDUSP, 1999.

50 On the subject, see: OLIVEIRA, Cecilia Helena de Salles. *Vidas em paralelo: o Museu Paulista e a construção da memória dos fundadores do Império*. In: HADLER, M S et all (org). *Anais eletrônicos do IX Seminário Nacional do Centro de Memória da UNICAMP*. Campinas, UNICAMP, 2019. See also, OLIVEIRA, C. H. L. S.. *Retrato ficcional e implicações historiográficas: a figura de Gonçalves Ledo na decoração interna do Museu Paulista*. In: Cecilia Helena L. de Salles Oliveira. (Org.). *O Museu Paulista e a gestão de Afonso Taunay: escrita da história e historiografia, séculos XIX e XX*. São Paulo: Museu Paulista da USP, 2017, v. 1, p. 115-158. See also DIAS, Elaine. *A representação da realeza no Brasil*. *Anais do Museu Paulista da USP*, vol.14, n. 1, Jan/Jun 2006, p. 243-261; SIMIONI, Ana Paula & LIMA JÚNIOR, Carlos *Heróínas em batalhas: figurações femininas em museus em*

extent and from what political and cultural presuppositions independence, sometimes as “*revolution*” or as “*emancipation*”, in different versions, ambiguities and temporalities projected itself in the visual imagination of this opaque past, but always resumed in which the nation would have been forged?

## *Independence and visual representations*

Visual sources have been explored by the discipline of history for a long time, but since the 1980s, in particular, the concern to conceptualize and delimit a specific field called “*visual culture*”, focused mainly on the relevance and breadth that visibility has acquired with the development of technologies for the reproducibility of paintings, engravings and photographs and the expansion of world market relations, starting in the 19th century<sup>51</sup>.

Visual culture extrapolates manifestations traditionally associated with art, in its different aspects, such as sculpture and painting, for example, also covering photographs, exhibition spaces, museums and visual representations in movement, such as cinema and audiovisuals. One of the focuses of analysis in this field is the study of the cultural ways of seeing, of the relationships between seeing and not seeing, of the filters through which one learns to look at nature and society, also discussing the nexuses between seeing and knowing, as well as cultural procedures of observation/action that can blind rather than clarify<sup>52</sup>. Roger Chartier, among other authors, recalled how the production of images, on the most differentiated supports,

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tempo centenários, Museu Paulista e Museu Histórico Nacional. *Museologia & Interdisciplinaridade*. Brasília, UnB, vol. 7, Jan/Jun 2018, p. 31-54.

51 See on the subject: KNAUSS, Paulo. O desafio de fazer história com imagens: arte e cultura visual. *ArtCultura*. Uberlândia, v. 8, n.12, Jan/Jun, 2006, p. 97-115; MENESES, Ulpiano Toledo Bezerra de. Fontes visuais, cultura visual, História visual. Balanço provisório, propostas cautelares. *Revista Brasileira de História*. São Paulo, ANPUH, v. 23, n. 45, 2003, p. 11-36.

52 Check the observations of Manoel Luiz Salgado Guimarães in the paper already mentioned in note 2.

including philately and numismatics, for example, was intertwined with the engendering and dissemination of discourses about power, about social relations, hierarchies and forms of domination<sup>53</sup>. For him, from the liberal revolutions of the late eighteenth century, political struggles simultaneously caused symbolic and representation struggles. Thus, it is understood the weight of monuments, historical paintings, pantheons, sculptures, arches of triumph, flags, streamers, engravings and other forms of visual representation in the configuration of the universe of politics, from that period, concomitant with the construction of memories and historical narratives that crystallized in writing and in figures of language, interpretations on episodes, characters and chronologies<sup>54</sup>.

Paulo Knauss, when discussing the design of “*visual culture*”, highlights not only different ways of approaching images and visual representations over time, but also underlines other relevant issues. The first one concerns the links between visual narratives, production of meanings and social processes. “*Meanings are not taken as data, but as cultural construction*”, which for the author leads to a second order of questioning: “*society is also organized from the confrontation of discourses*” and it is “*in this field that symbolic disputes are established as social disputes*”<sup>55</sup>. The processes of production/updating of meanings in the context of political struggles and representations lead to the understanding that, like words, but in a different and specific dimension in relation to the written text, images are not manifestations destined to contemplation or mere manipulation, constituting active agents of mobilization and political action as well as configuration of memory<sup>56</sup>.

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53 CHARTIER, Roger. O mundo como representação. *Estudos Avançados*, v. 5, n. 11, 1991, p. 173-191.

54 ANDERSON, Benedict. *Comunidades imaginadas*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 2008; and HOBBSAWM, Eric & RANGER, Terence (org). *A invenção das tradições*. Rio de Janeiro, Paz e Terra, 1984.

55 KNAUSS, Paulo. *Ob.cit.*, p. 100-101.

56 Consult about this: VESENTINI, Carlos Alberto. *A teia do fato*. Proposta de estudo sobre a memória histórica. São Paulo, PPG História Social/HUCITEC, 1997. See, also, the work of Régine Robin, aforementioned.

In this sense, and focusing on the questions raised in this Forum, I consider it relevant to problematize the articulations between politics and culture, intertwining the production of historical knowledge, politics and imagery representations, aiming to deepen knowledge about the visual narratives historically idealized and disseminated about and of Independence.

I selected within the limits of this paper only some of the representations that I have investigated. The first of these (Figure 1) is an anonymous lithograph dating from the 1840s and published by Stanislaw Herstal<sup>57</sup>. It is noteworthy the way the scene was composed, the special place for the character of an indigenous person, apparently subordinated to the “civilized” culture and customs. According to Alfredo Bosi, at this moment of romanticism the discussion about national origins and identity involved the recovery of the good savage that became Brazilian, a reference to indigenous groups that would have been intertwined with the colonist/ colonizer. The indigenous in the image appears in communion with the Prince and his small entourage, obliterating processes of extermination and domination that had been exacerbated since the end of the eighteenth century, with the expansion of agricultural borders in Rio de Janeiro and other provinces of the south-central. For Bosi, the projection of the aculturated indigenous people is articulated with the rise of conservative groups to power and the separation of reformist and republican liberal proposals, notably after the majority of Pedro II<sup>58</sup>. On the other hand, the figure of the good savage dialogues with the naturalization of the colonizing process. Could it also be interpreted as a symbolic element of the links built at the time between nature, culture and monarchy in Brazil?

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57 HERSTAL, Stanislaw. *D. Pedro I: estudo iconográfico*. Lisboa, Casa da Moeda, 1972, 3 volumes.

58 BOSI, Alfredo. *História concisa da literatura brasileira*. 45<sup>th</sup> Edition. São Paulo, Cultrix, 2010, Chap. 4.

**Figure 1 - Anonymous lithography, c. 1840**



Long live the Perpetual Defender of Brazil, everyone sings!  
Independent Brazil, Hooray, a thousand voices sound out!

Source: HERSTAL, Stanislaw. D. Pedro I: estudo iconográfico . Lisboa, Casa da Moeda, 1972, 1st Volume. Photography: José Rosael. Collection - Biblioteca do Museu Paulista da USP

At the same time of the circulation of the image, a publication in the city of Rio de Janeiro, *Minerva brasiliense, jornal de ciências, letras e artes*, published a long anonymous poem called “*Ipiranga*”<sup>59</sup>. The periodical was written by Francisco Salles Torres Homem, on the liberal political occasion that had integrated one of the most active nuclei of romantic politicians, formed by Gonçalves Magalhães, Manuel de Araújo Porto-Alegre and João Manuel Pereira da Silva, among others, responsible for the magazine *Niterói*, interpreted as the landmark of

<sup>59</sup> Collection *Minerva Brasiliense, jornal de ciências, letras e artes*, August 1844 edition. Acervo digital da Biblioteca Nacional.

the romantic movement in Brazil<sup>60</sup>. Divided into three parts - The pedestrian, the ranch and the prince - it presents enormous coincidence with the engraving, because the narrative reports the path traveled by a pedestrian Indian to cross the valley of Paraíba and deliver to D. Pedro, on the banks of the Ipiranga stream, the letters that would have provoked his heroic gesture on September 7.

The following representation (Figure 2) is a painting called “*Proclamation of Independence*”, dated 1844, conceived by the French artist François-René Moureaux, belonging to the collection of the National Historical Museum. For the work he carried out in preparation for the celebrations of the coronation of Pedro II, he received from the Senate of the Empire the commission to prepare a panel in honor of Independence<sup>61</sup>. In a first approximation, it is possible to observe the lightness of the scene, without precise identification of patio, as in the previously mentioned engraving. D. Pedro occupies the center of the image, surrounded by a multiplicity of figures in civil costumes, perhaps expressing what the artist considered as the society of citizens. It draws attention to the number of children, a common resource at the time to connote the belief in the future of the newly constituted young nation. D. Pedro holds a hat, valuing the relationship of the monarch with the people and, in particular, the popular acclamation, reverberating perhaps the intense political discussion and the strong social involvement that surrounded the movement for the majority of Pedro II.

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60 BOSI, Alfredo. *Ob.cit*, chap. 4. On the trajectory of Francisco Salles Torres Homem, consult the work of Izabel Marson *Política, história e método...* [Politics, history and method ...], already quoted, ch. 1.

61 About François-René Moureaux, see: SQUEFF, Letícia. Esquecida no fundo de um armário: a triste história da Coroação de Pedro II. In: “Dossiê Pintura de História”. *Anais do Museu Histórico Nacional*, vol. 39, 2007, p. 105-128.



**Figure 2 - François-René Moureaux (1807-1860)**

***Proclamation of Independence. Oil on canvas, 1844, 244 x 383 cm***



Source: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/cb/Independencia\\_brasil\\_001.jpg/250px-Independencia\\_brasil\\_001.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/c/cb/Independencia_brasil_001.jpg/250px-Independencia_brasil_001.jpg)

In 1862, one of the most controversial sculptural ensembles of the Empire was inaugurated (Figure 3), the target of contradictory versions, and which until today constitutes one of the landmarks of the urban space of the city of Rio de Janeiro, as it was built in the current Tiradentes Square, place formerly known as Campo de Santana and Praça da Constituição. Emblematic space because Tiradentes' ordeal was there, in 1792, and political manifestations were concentrated there, bringing together popular people, voters, deputies and troops, in the 1820s and 1830s<sup>62</sup>.

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62 OLIVEIRA, Cecilia Helena de Salles. *O espetáculo do Ypiranga*. Habilitation Thesis. São Paulo, Museu Paulista da USP, 2000, first part, chapter 1.



**Figure 3 - Equestrian statue of D. Pedro I. Tiradentes Square, Rio de Janeiro.  
Photography: Carlos Luís M. C. da Cruz, 2012.**



Source:[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/51/Monumento\\_a\\_pedro\\_i\\_do\\_brasil.jpg/800px-Monumento\\_a\\_Pedro\\_i\\_do\\_Brasil.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/51/Monumento_a_pedro_i_do_brasil.jpg/800px-Monumento_a_Pedro_i_do_Brasil.jpg)

The proposal to erect a sculpture in honor of Pedro I had been discussed by the Rio de Janeiro City Council since the granting of the Constitutional Charter in 1824. Abandoned with Abdication, it was considered again in the 1840s, but it was only in the 1850s that the Chamber of Rio de Janeiro managed, thanks to incomes obtained from lotteries, the resources to hold the public tender and choose the best aesthetic solution. The project brought together two proposals:

that of Louis Roché, a French sculptor, and that of the artist João Maximiliano Mafra, professor at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts<sup>63</sup>.

At first the inauguration was scheduled for the date of March 25, 1862, when forty years would be celebrated of the proclamation of Independence and thirty-eight years of the Constitution of the Empire. Heavy rains, however, forced the festivities to be postponed, generating enormous concern for the conservative cabinet and D. Pedro II, who wanted to avoid at all costs a coincidence between the inauguration and the April 7th, as the monarch recorded in his *Diário*<sup>64</sup>. In addition to that, both in the press and in parliament, the sculpture was fueling an intense debate regarding the relations between the Executive and Legislative, the practices of liberalism and, above all, about what the opposition to the cabinet of the time considered undue interference from the Moderator power in the progress of public affairs<sup>65</sup>.

The sculptural ensemble inaugurated on March 30 of that year shows D. Pedro riding a steed, wearing a military gala uniform and holding in his hands the Constitution of 1824. Thus, the liberating hero and the political foundations of the monarchical state were allied in the same monumental representation.

The equestrian statue was placed on a bronze and stone structure ornamented by allegories that fixed the dimensions of the territory of the Empire through the representation of four of the main Brazilian rivers: Amazonas, Paraná, São Francisco and Madeira. The rivers are materialized through groups of indigenous peoples (men, women, children) carrying differentiated paraphernalia (bows, arrows,

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63 About Pedro I's equestrian sculpture, see: KNAUSS, Paulo. A festa da imagem: a afirmação da escultura pública no Brasil do século XIX. *Revista eletrônica* 19820. Rio de Janeiro, v. V, n. 4, Oct/Dec, 2010.

64 Diário de D. Pedro II – 1862. *Anuário do Museu Imperial*. Petrópolis, MEC, 1956, vol. XVII.

65 About the period consult: ABRÊU, Eide Sandra Azevêdo. *O evangelho do comércio universal. Tavares Bastos e as tramas da Liga Progressista e do Partido Liberal, 1861/1872*. São Paulo, Annablume/FAPESP, 2011; SANTOS, Eduardo José Neves. *As múltiplas faces da polêmica liberal*. Master's Thesis. Campinas, UNICAMP, 2019.

rattles) and animals (alligator, fish, birds, turtles, anteater, capybara) that would be characteristic of each of the regions represented (north/south/east/west). The monument also adorns the coats of arms of the 20 provinces of the Empire.

It is possible to conjecture that sculpture demarcates time and history, defines space (territory) and the subject of history. D. Pedro would not only have proclaimed the separation of Portugal but also became the political nucleus of a national foundation, materialized in Rio de Janeiro, acting as a center of convergence of populations and the different quadrants of the territory inherited from colonization.

Twenty-six years later, in 1888, Pedro Américo de Figueiredo e Mello concluded, in Florence, the panel that became, throughout the twentieth century, the emblematic representation of the proclamation of Independence (Figure 4). The painting had been commissioned by the Commission in charge of erecting, in the 1880s, in the vicinity of the city of São Paulo, a Monument to the date of September 7 and to the founder of the Empire. It is the monument building of Ipiranga that, since 1894, began to house the Museu Paulista, the first public museum of São Paulo, integrated to the University of São Paulo in 1963<sup>66</sup>. The panel "*Independência ou Morte!*" [*Independence or Death!*] came into the hands of the Commission that same year, but only on the occasion of the opening of the Museum in 1895, did it become the object of permanent exhibition at the site of the building that was intended for it, the Noble Hall or Hall of Honor of the institution<sup>67</sup>.

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66 About the history of the Monument-Museum, consult, among others, WITTER, José Sebastião & BARBUY, Heloisa (org). *Museu Paulista, um monumento no Ipiranga*. São Paulo, FIESP, 1997.

67 About the artist and the panel "*Independência ou Morte!*", see: OLIVEIRA, Cecilia Helena de Salles & VALLADÃO, Cláudia (org). *O brado do Ipiranga*. São Paulo, EdUSP, 1999.

**Figure 4 - Pedro Américo de Figueiredo e Mello (1843-1905)**

***Independência ou Morte, 1888. Oil on canvas***

**415 x 760 cm.**



Source: Collection of the Paulista Museum of the University of São Paulo

Image Location:

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/7e/Pedro\\_Am%C3%A9rico\\_-\\_Independ%C3%Aancia\\_ou\\_Morte\\_-\\_Google\\_Art\\_Project.jpg/800px-Pedro\\_Am%C3%A9rico\\_-\\_Independ%C3%Aancia\\_ou\\_Morte\\_-\\_Google\\_Art\\_Project.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/7e/Pedro_Am%C3%A9rico_-_Independ%C3%Aancia_ou_Morte_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg/800px-Pedro_Am%C3%A9rico_-_Independ%C3%Aancia_ou_Morte_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)

One of the goals of History painting is to produce visual testimony about events and characters from the imagined past. It aims to instruct the public for which it is intended, to convey ethical values and, above all, to promote the recognition of national heroes, constituting a fundamental component of political myths, because it offers visibility for what has already disappeared and can no longer be

witnessed or shared in function of the transforming action of time<sup>68</sup>. By stimulating the historical imagination about the country's past, it dialogues with the national memory-history built in institutions such as the Brazilian Historical and Geographic Institute, for example. However, his authority as a projection of "truths" is based both in place of his public exhibition, in this case the Museu Paulista, and on the procedures mobilized by the artist who, to reconstruct the time in credible detail, sought support in textual records, objects, portraits, engravings and historiographic interpretations<sup>69</sup>. The painting of History proposes to be a book that can be read by those who cannot read, exerting a strong emotional impression and great influence on the perception of history<sup>70</sup>.

The workmanship of Pedro Américo comes deserving studies and analyses that had exceeded the dimensions of the history of the Art in Brazil, as well as the biography of the artist. It has innumerable related questions, among others, to the aesthetic options adopted by the painter, to the protagonists of the scene and space disposal in the painting and, noteworthy, to the trace of Pedro Américo produced at moment at which the painting of History came suffering to the competition and the critical one either of that other inspirations and subjects valued the photograph either of that found in the call realism<sup>71</sup>. In the context of the debate proposed here I highlight three points which are most strongly linked to the arguments I have been developing since the beginning of this text.

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68 COLI, Jorge. Introdução à pintura de História. "Dossiê Pintura de História". *Anais do Museu Histórico Nacional*, vol. 39, 2007, p. 49-58.

69 About the procedures adopted by the artist, see: MELLO, Pedro Américo de Figueiredo e. *O brado do Ypiranga ou a proclamação da Independência do Brasil. Algumas palavras acerca do facto histórico e do quadro que o comemora*. Florença, Typografia de Arte dela Stampa, 1888. Acervo da Biblioteca do Museu Paulista. Fac-similar reproduction is found in the work organized by OLIVEIRA & VALLADÃO, aforementioned.

70 COLI, Jorge. *Ob. cit.*, p. 49-58.

71 See, among others: ALVES, Caleb Faria. *Benedito Calixto e a construção do imaginário republicano*. Bauru, EDUSC, 2003; ROSEMBERG, Liana. *Pedro Américo e o olhar oitocentista*. Rio de Janeiro, Barroso, 2002.



The first of them, which acquired a strong repercussion at the time as well as later, concerns the artist's care in explaining in the composition of the scene and in the selected color palette that the cradle of Independence and of the national foundation was in São Paulo. Different from all the aforementioned representations, the panel consolidates the political and historical link between the city/province of São Paulo, symbolized in the Ipiranga stream, drawn in the foreground, the date of September 7, 1822 and the history of Brazil.

The second point to be underlined is the recovery of the links between Independence and the triggering of a *revolution*. In the pamphlet he wrote to justify his choices and the historical interpretation that underpinned artistic creation, Pedro Americo established a direct relationship between the particularity of the event and the universal dimension of the "*wave of freedom*" that motivated the "*human spirit*" to "*break the iron chain with which it lays at the stump of despotism*". In this way, it reconstituted links between Independence and the struggle for "*freedom against tyranny*", triggered by the French Revolution which, "*similar to the wave of intertropical seas, in its vertiginous career as a continent on a continent and as a society in society it illuminated with its fiery vane the fragas and stumbling blocks that opposed its passage*"<sup>72</sup>.

Unavoidable and uncontrollable movement, how does the *revolution* emerge in the representations and in the disposition of the characters that the artist built? Would the static figures of D. Pedro and his entourage be subjected to a broader process, but invisible to the unaware eye, which determined attitudes and decisions caught by the brush? How to understand the presence of tropeiros and the man pulling an oxen cart beyond the superficiality of considering them spectators of the scene? Complex, nuanced and full of details, the panel, notably during the preparations for the celebrations of the Centenary of Independence, in 1922, was occupying, by virtue of the authority of the museological institution in which it is located and

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72 MELLO, Pedro Américo Figueiredo e. *Ob.cit.*, p. 5-6.

by means of reproducibility of the image, the symbolic and political space of emblematic representation of Independence, interpreted in the immediate vicinity of the links between date, place and character.

But what about the conception of *revolution* that guided the artist? The numerous mediations between the writing of Pedro Américo and the monumental canvas he idealized still lack deep questions, further complicated by the fact that the panel, since the time of the centenary celebrations in 1922, is surrounded by internal decoration that contemplates a national pantheon, concomitantly with a set of sculptures and representations of scenes and episodes of the history of Brazil<sup>73</sup>. In this sense, the third aspect that I consider important to emphasize is the superimposition, in the same space, of images about the process of Independence and the foundation of the Empire that project not only multiple artistic representations, articulated by the vision of Afonso Taunay, director of the Museum in that period, as incongruous and opaque historiographical interpretations. In other words, the images demand specific analyzes, but, at the same time, in-depth assessments of their interrelations, meanings and historicities. The thirty-one portraits that make up the pantheon, distributed by the central staircase of the building and the Hall of Honor were placed over more than a decade and, due to the place where they are placed, have become beacons from which the protagonists of Independence were defined to deserve study and attention, such as José Bonifácio, Gonçalves Ledo, Padre Feijó, Cipriano Barata, Silva Lisboa, among others.

What characteristics could be attributed to the Independence that the Monument-Museum designed? In what way were “*revolution*”, “*emancipation*”, “*evolution*”, conceptions that cross historiographical versions since the 19th century, translated into impactful, but two-dimensional representations, inscribed in a profusion of names,

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<sup>73</sup> Detailed description of the interior decoration of the Paulista Museum can be found at: TAUNAY, Afonso d'Escragno. *Guia da Seção histórica do Museu Paulista*. São Paulo, Imprensa Oficial do Estado, 1937.



dates, faces and landscapes ? Through what paths have these images and their designs, sometimes invisible or hidden, been updated and reproduced inside and outside the historiographic field?

To problematize links, overlaps and contradictions between the writing of history and visual narratives about history, particularly when it comes to an episode that marks the national foundation, implies, in my view, following Claude Lefort's reflections.

“... Thinking, rethinking the politician [is] a task that must be resumed, from time to time ... We seek the mark of the politician in facts, in acts, in representations ... attentive to the signs of repetition as to signs of the new, highlighting the symbolic dimension of the social ... The politician thus reveals himself not in what is called political activity, but in this double movement of appearance and concealment of the institution's mode of society. Appearance in the sense that the critical process through which society is ordered and unified, through its divisions, emerges from visibility; concealment, in the sense that a place of politics (place where the competition of the parties is exercised and where the general instance of power is formed and renewed) is designated as private, while the general principle of the configuration of the together ... ”<sup>74</sup>.

Also look for inspiration in Lucien Febvre when he warns that the historian's primary object is not “*a fragment of the real*”, an isolated aspect of human activity, but “*human beings endowed with multiple functions, activities diverse, with varied concerns and attitudes, which intertwine, clash, contradict each other ...*”. This results in what the historian calls “*unrest*”, invited to retake, rethink and readjust results achieved “*...to*

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<sup>74</sup> LEFORT, Claude. *Pensando o político*. Trans. Eliana Souza. Rio de Janeiro, Paz e Terra, 1991, p. 14-15 e p. 26-27.

*the new conditions of existence that time and men, that men in the context of time, do not cease to forge... ”<sup>75</sup>.*

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75 FEVBRE, Lucien. *Combats pour l’Histoire*. Seconde Édition. Paris, Armand Colin, 1965, p. 20-21.

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