

# THE CENTENARY OF THE BRAZILIAN INDEPENDENCE IN OUR PRIMARY SCHOOLS: DISPUTING SCHOOL HISTORICAL NARRATIVES

O CENTENÁRIO DA INDEPENDÊNCIA BRASILEIRA EM NOSSAS ESCOLAS PRIMÁRIAS:  
NARRATIVAS HISTÓRICAS ESCOLARES EM DISPUTA

EL CENTENARIO DE LA INDEPENDENCIA BRASILEÑA EN NUESTRAS ESCUELAS PRIMARIAS:  
NARRATIVAS HISTÓRICAS ESCOLARES EN DISPUTA

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**Abstract:** The present study analyzed how teaching inspectors, State agents, history teaching specialists and historians intended to appropriate the celebrations of the centenary of the Brazilian Independence to affirm a certain vision of this historical fact in primary school. Through a documentary analysis of the magazine *A Escola Primária*, the theme was addressed from two perspectives. The first is historiographical disputes. The second is the pedagogical dimension based on the didactic transposition. The results indicate the investments of specialists in the school historical narrative about the Brazilian Independence practiced in primary education, considered an important way of consolidating the national identity.

**Keywords:** political emancipation; history; primary school; narrative.

**Resumo:** O artigo propõe um estudo sobre como os inspetores de ensino, agentes do Estado, especialistas em ensino de história e historiadores pretenderam se apropriar das comemorações do centenário da independência brasileira para afirmar uma determinada visão deste fato histórico na escola primária. Por meio da análise documental da revista *A Escola Primária*, o tema foi tratado sob duas perspectivas. A primeira são as disputas historiográficas. A segunda é a dimensão pedagógica a partir do processo de transposição didática. Os resultados da pesquisa indicam os investimentos de especialistas na narrativa histórica escolar sobre a independência brasileira praticada no ensino primário, à medida que era importante via de consolidação da identidade nacional.

**Palavras-chave:** emancipação política; história; ensino primário; narrativa.

**Resumen:** El artículo propone un estudio sobre cómo los inspectores docentes, los agentes estatales, los especialistas en enseñanza de la historia y los historiadores pretenden apropiarse de las celebraciones del centenario de la independencia brasileña para afirmar una cierta visión de este hecho histórico en la escuela primaria. A través del análisis documental de la revista *A Escola Primária*, el tema fue tratado desde dos perspectivas. El primero son las disputas historiográficas. La segunda es la dimensión pedagógica basada en el proceso de transposición didáctica. Los resultados de la investigación indican las inversiones de especialistas en la narrativa escolar sobre la independencia brasileña practicada en la educación primaria, ya que era una forma importante de consolidar la identidad nacional.

**Palabras clave:** emancipación política; historia; escuela primaria; narrativa.

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## INTRODUCTION

In September 1921, a year before the commemorative date of the centenary of the Brazilian Independence, the monthly magazine *A Escola Primária*, a periodical run by school inspectors from the Federal District, published a schedule to commemorate the date in primary schools. This was defined as “[...] some elements to facilitate the body of teachers of primary schools in Brazil the most dignified celebration of our independence” (*A comemoração do centenário...*, 1921, p. 1). This edition of the magazine, aimed mainly at primary school teachers, had a circulation of 20,000 copies that were distributed to schools across the country. According to the editor, the publication of these guidelines had the objective of improving the commemorative celebrations through the adoption of a unique program for the entire national territory, capable of providing school childhood with an adequate civic manifestation.

The *A Escola Primária* editorial entitled ‘A comemoração do centenário nas escolas primárias’ had two aspects. The first was that activities should be feasible both in urban schools in large cities and in modest schools in the countryside, ‘lost in the middle of the Brazilian forests’. The activities could be didactically simplified, since it was more important that there was general and simultaneous execution throughout the country. The second aspect was to provide teachers with theoretical and methodological input for the proper performance of activities. Thus, the guidelines were divided into two sections: texts on recalling the events that preceded the Ipiranga episode and pedagogical practices celebrating independence.

The trajectory of history teaching shows that its content has always been part of the programs of the early years of schooling, with the aim of developing patriotism and sharing national feelings. In primary courses, the celebration of civic events associated the teaching of history with civism, propagating a school model of inspiration in countries considered civilized by Brazilian intellectuals, such as Germany, France and England.

Detienne (2013) highlights that, in the 19th century, the French, through historiographic choices, sought to build traits of singularity capable of building the feeling of homeland among the French people. In this context, primary school teachers gained relevance as they were given the narrative of the facts, the choice of subjects and the development of methods that would strengthen the cult of the homeland and build the conscience of the national.

In Brazil, as in other European countries, the subject was designed to contribute to the affirmation of national identity. Bittencourt (2018, p. 137) emphasizes that in

[...] primary schools History has joined with other subjects, Portuguese Language, Geography, Music especially to sediment not only in classrooms, but in the streets and public spaces through civic parties, parades that worshiped the heroes of the motherland and local heroes, the oligarchs and founders of the cities, the pioneers and builders of our immense territory.

According to Dettiene (2013), the construction of the national issue stems from historical conditions of collective imagination and identification. The construction depends on the creation of a symbolism, historical narratives and its communion with the sphere of the State. In this sense, analyses of the appropriation of the celebration of independence in primary schools are relevant, as this was the level of education most accessible to our population. The 1920 census indicates that there were 1,239,636 students enrolled throughout Brazil. Secondary school was a privilege for the few. Over the five years of primary education, it was important for teachers to transmit a broad idea of the country's trajectory, as most of their students would not have the opportunity to continue their studies and, consequently, would not be able to access school history, harming the process of building national identity. In the eyes of Ignácio Azevedo do Amaral (1921, p. 353), one of the editors of *A Escola Primária*:

We really need - as we have insisted - to define our goals as a nationality aware of destinies, we need to prepare the future by tracing the road that the new generations should share, we need to affirm the main ideas in which our people's mentality will be formed, to that it acquires the capacity to solve the great national problems, in order to assure well-being and progress, we must finally lay the foundations of our instructional policy, starting with primary education, choosing the molds in which our people should be educated.

The purpose of this article was to analyze how the teaching inspectors, agents of the State, through their guidance to teachers, intended to appropriate the celebrations of the centenary of the Brazilian Independence to affirm a certain vision of the national identity idealized for the republican period. In this analysis, two aspects will be fundamental: the historiographical disputes present in school history in primary education and the guidelines for the construction of the school historical narrative about this fact.

In primary education, different views of our historiography were at issue. In the magazine *A Escola Primária*, there was a permanent column on the history of Brazil in which intellectuals, members of the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute (IHGB), and professors from Colégio Pedro II published their studies. The purpose of this type of dissemination was for teachers to use this material to prepare their classes: to build their narrative about the facts and to elaborate exercises. In

this analysis, three professors from Colégio Pedro II stood out, namely: Pedro do Coutto, Escragnolle Dória and Osório Duque Estrada, for having written articles in the number about the celebration of Brazil's independence. The published article prepared by Ignácio Azevedo do Amaral, principal of Normal School between 1917 and 1920 also serve as a source. As intellectuals, they held positions in educational administration bodies and participated in commissions that elaborated the Education Programs of Colégio Pedro II, which were reference for other secondary education institutions in the country. In this sense, they played an active role in the process of transforming erudite historical knowledge into the format of school history.

The second is the didactic dimension, as it is fundamental for the transmission of school knowledge. When studying school culture and the curriculum of primary schools, Souza (2005) distinguishes the configuration of subjects in secondary education, elaborated from research domains, and the knowledge taught in primary schools that have different links with the reference sciences.

In addition to the first lessons, the primary school is designed to teach a diversity of cultural contents of different natures: scientific concepts, moral and civic duties, procedures and basic skills. These contents, although organized in subjects, are not characterized in the same way as the strict segmentations of subjects in secondary education. On the other hand, the knowledge of elementary education suffers even more than at other levels of education, the imperatives of didacticization (Souza, 2005, p. 85).

Among the various possibilities for studying the history taught, we resort to the concept of didactic transposition developed by Yves Chevallard (1991). We intend to highlight the relationship between students and teachers, aiming at building an essay that explains the role of didactics, capable of building school knowledge from scientific knowledge, in the realization of national educational projects. In a context that added other factors such as political demands, intellectual paradigms and pedagogical renewal, the role of the teacher will be highlighted as the appropriation of scientific knowledge for everyday school life depends, with the purpose of promoting the learning of the contents, from an appropriate didactic process.

## **PEDRO DO COUTTO AND ESCRAGNOLLE DORIA AND THE CENTENARY OF INDEPENDENCE**

Pedro do Coutto and Escragnolle Doria produced historiographical texts for the 'Ideias e Factos' section of *A escola Primária*. The texts were published shortly after the items 'Programma para a comemoração do primeiro centenario da

proclamação da independência, nas escolas primarias do Brasil' and 'Política de instrução publica'. They had the purpose of offering subsidies to the 'rememoração dos acontecimentos que prepararam o episódio do Ypiranga'.

According to Pereira (1921, 1924), Pedro do Coutto had a bachelor's degree in legal and social sciences and was a member of the Historical and Geographic Institute of Ceará. He was appointed substitute professor in the seat of General and Brazilian history at Colégio Pedro II, by choice of the Congregation. He was also an effective professor of Brazilian history and civic instruction at the Normal School of the Federal District. He was in the interim exercise of professor at the day-school between 1917 and 1922. In 1906, he conducted the supplementary general history class at the boarding school. He was part of an examining board for a content for a geography professor position in 1916. He practiced teaching in secondary schools, maintained by the city hall and which were extinct and at the Lyceum of Arts and Crafts. He collaborated in several newspapers and magazines in the capital and published a textbook adopted by Colégio Pedro II and in similar schools. He was part of the Brazilian Congress of Secondary and Higher Education in 1922. Pedro do Coutto became full professor of general history in 1925.

Escragnolle Doria also had a bachelor's degree in legal and social sciences, a corresponding member of the National Museum and 13 more associations of scientific and literary character, a lens of universal history and especially of America and Brazil of the Externato do Ginásio Nacional. He entered the Colégio Pedro II through a contest, nominated in 1906. He occupied, temporarily at the day-school, the seats of French, English, logic and geography. He was a professor at the Municipal Pedagogium between 1908 and 1909. Between 1917 and 1922, he was director of the National Archives. He was considered 'Man of Letters', of numerous productions. He had approximately 17 years of service rendered to Colégio Pedro II (Pereira, 1921, 1924), in the context in which he published his column. Later, he wrote the book *Memória histórica do Colégio Pedro II* and was appointed Professor Emeritus in 1937.

During the 1st Centenary of the Independence of Brazil, the Congregation of Colégio Pedro II joined the various tributes paid, in order to remember this historic landmark. According to Doria (1997), some teachers, among them Pedro do Coutto, were appointed to compose a commission that would represent the Congregation on the arrival of heads of State who came to Rio de Janeiro, then Federal District, to participate in the centennial celebration of Independence. The Congregation approved a congratulatory motion addressed to the high powers of the Republic by the decree that revoked the ban of the Royal Family of Brazil and that ordered the transfer of the remains of Dom Pedro II and Dona Thereza Christina, which were, until then, deposited in the Bragantino mortuary pantheon of the Monastery of São Vicente de Fora, in Lisbon.

Titled *A nossa independência*, the text by Pedro do Coutto (1921, p. 255, emphasis added) states that “[...] to celebrate the independence of a people is to evoke the moment when they freed themselves 'entirely' from those who gave rise to it”. Therefore, we wanted the perspective that we were seen, in the historical context of the 1st Centenary of the Brazilian Independence, still as a Cologne, before the Portuguese. There are several passages in which this perspective is highlighted. ‘The old discord between kingdoms and colonists’ still existed.

Most of our countrymen are dominated by the old kingdoms, who abuse our weakness and exploit us at will. [...] They have everything here - just as they wish [...]. We live for them (Coutto, 1921, p. 255).

According to Pedro do Coutto, it was necessary to ‘history with the truth’, to make the youth feel what September 7 represented and what were its main figures. This date demanded a logical complement 99 years ago: our complete separation from Portuguese, which the author considered a civic teaching, which should ‘be preached with ardor, with faith, with patriotism’ by primary teachers. In his view, teaching civics, therefore, is teaching how to love one’s homelands, and there should be no spirit of animosity for others when we worship ours. This love for the homeland should be taught in primary schools, without instilling dislike for others. It was necessary to love Brazil and present it without excesses, but also without disabilities, since, in general, the opposite was the case.

As in the first column, José Bonifácio and Dom Pedro I are placed as the highest exponents of Independence, as well as the dignity with which other Brazilians died is emphasized. The emperor, according to Coutto, would have erred much later and revealed himself to be more Portuguese than Brazilian, when he paid compensation to Portugal for our Independence. José Bonifácio’s mistakes are also pointed out, however Coutto (1921, p. 256) argues that their names should be raised with justice ‘to the role that they play in this patriotic work’.

But also, what should be known is that at the right time, it was the prestige of D. Pedro I that José Bonifácio used to separate us from Portugal. And this separation the great *paulista* had already started to carry out, when as minister, he decided that no act from the metropolis would be put into execution in Brazil without the prince’s execution.

Finally, Coutto (1921, p. 256) establishes a parallel between the Independence of Brazil and the Proclamation of the Republic, regarding the main actors of these historical landmarks. According to him, Republic was proclaimed thanks

[...] to the action of Benjamin Constant action in the spirit of Deodoro (identical to that of José Bonifácio and D Pedro I) and in the effective assistance of Floriano Peixoto, but the propaganda service of these 3 main actors in favor of the Republic was none.

José Bonifácio and dom Pedro I would have been the “[...] summary of old aspirations that were maturing and that they harvested at the right moment” (Coutto, 1921, p. 255). The September 7 work needed to be completed, a wish that came from afar, but the Portuguese current still won. We should not intervene in Portugal’s business, just as we should not allow any interference in ours. It was necessary to learn to love our land as the Portuguese love theirs, to learn from them to be nationalists, and that love would give us complete independence.

In turn, Escragnolle Doria’s column is entitled ‘*O Fico*’. In it, the author is concerned with detailing the aforementioned episode and initially discusses the current events of that year 1821, referring to the death of Napoleão Bonaparte and the return of Dom João VI to Portugal, leaving here almost a nation. The author is assertive when stating that with ‘homeland, in the various institutions created, and body, it was easy to seek soul in freedom’ and that the withdrawal of the Portuguese court from Rio de Janeiro gave encouragement to political and patriotic aspirations, however, weakened the economic reality. Doria points to the consequences of the lack of resources, which caused commotion or revolt in the provinces, describing it ‘as a moment of uncertainty and hopes for some and others, and the unease of all’.

In Portugal, the Courts were ‘unfriendly to royalty’. It was expected that Brazil would be recolonized and that Dom Pedro would return to Portugal. The French consul writes to his government that the prince regent, ‘without the advice of a man with a good head’, left the country to anarchy and passions. At the end of 1821, a ship brought by the hands of the infant Dom Miguel, several impositions of the Courts of Lisbon, in the form of decrees, to the prince. Among them, that of abandoning Brazil. He would travel through some illustrated countries in order to obtain knowledge to occupy the Portuguese throne with dignity. Some Portuguese, Brazilian Republicans and Portuguese troops supported the prince’s departure. Most, however, wished him to stay.

José Bonifácio, marechal Arouche and coronel Gama Lobo came from São Paulo to plead with the prince for disobedience to the Courts. They arrived in the same week that people in Rio de Janeiro signed a petition in favor of Dom Pedro’s stay, an episode also present in Pedro do Coutto’ as column.

Doria then goes on to highlight the importance and achievements of the president of the Senate and the Chamber, José Clemente Pereira, in the Independence process, from the climate of expectation, discomfort and silence

caused by the hearing on January 9, 1822, in which whether to decide for the possible ‘yes, a Brazil covered with flowers, or for no, Brazil dyed with blood’.

According to Doria, on the 9th of January, two characters draw general attention: Dom Pedro, representative of the people in his most direct mandate, the municipal; and José Clemente Pereira, a royal agent and paternal dynastic attorney. ‘Both Portuguese, but united to the Brazilian country in a great historical event’. Their trajectories are summarized in the text. Luck would have put them ahead of the events of January 9, 1822, in Largo do Paço, where the prince regent, José Clemente and the ‘good men of the city or chamberlains’ met, at the time of publication of the column called ‘municipal intendants’.

As they left the meeting, José Clemente, followed by officials and employees of the Chamber, read a long speech for Dom Pedro’s stay. Some excerpts of this speech are reproduced by Doria, possibly with expectations of divulging the documents that he believed to support his version and offer didactic resources to primary teachers. Colonel Carneiro, representative of Rio Grande do Sul, endorsed Clemente’s speech, affirming ‘the perfect agreement between the feelings of his countrymen and those of Rio de Janeiro’.

Dom Pedro, then, from the top of the throne, addressed Clement and said; “As it is for the good of all and for the general happiness of the nation, I am ready, tell the people that I will stay”. Clemente, along with the Senate and Chamber attorney, conveyed to the people the prince’s response, ‘Fico of so many consequences’. Hundreds of voices asked for the prince. Dom Pedro appeared at one of the windows and said “urbi et populi: now I can only recommend union and tranquility”.

Finally, Doria reproduces Clemente’s speech, given in 1821, in the Chamber of Deputies, about the patriarchy of Independence and states that for the intelligence and security of Fico’s events, it is important, above all, to read not only that speech, but also ‘the letter from the Prince Regent to D. João VI, on the very day of the success, narrating it, in a moderate and respectful phrase, containing the ardent natural and the bellicose dispositions’.

History, according to Doria, is a very delicate sieve, not serving in any hand and points out that there are many other documents before and after ‘Fico’ to judge it with patience and serenity, attributes of the true historian.

In his research on the construction of the professional identity of the teachers at Colégio Pedro II, Soares (2015) states that, from the point of view of the body of teachers, the school articulated more with higher education institutions than with other secondary educational institutions. One factor that contributes to explain the proximity between the versions has to do with the affinity between Colégio Pedro II and Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute (IHGB), institutions created by the imperial government. Some of the first teachers at Colégio Pedro II, such as

Manoel de Araujo Porto Alegre, Lino Antonio Rebello, Justiniano José da Rocha, Joaquim Caetano da Silva, Emilio Joaquim da Silva Maia, Joaquim Manoel de Macedo, Francisco de Paula Menezes and Tiburcio Antonio Chaveiro, they were also effective partners and members of IHGB (Mendonca, Lopes, Soares, & Patroclo, 2013, p. 994), an institution responsible for writing the official history of the nation. They are teachers who, in addition to working at the school responsible for the formation of the country's intellectual elites, contributed to the project of building a Brazilian nationality. Although the teachers' versions of Colégio Pedro II are similar, we can see some differences in their narratives. Pedro do Coutto, for example, seems to highlight José Bonifácio's performance alongside Dom Pedro in the Independence process, while Escragnolle Dória emphasizes the importance of José Clemente Pereira.

Escragnolle Doria, together with the full professor João Ribeiro, was responsible for the elaboration of the Brazilian history program, which remained unchanged from 1912 to 1926, at Colégio Pedro II (Santos, 2011). Doria died in 1948. We emphasize that Doria was a member of the IHGB. The historians of IHGB played a fundamental role in telling the nation to Brazilians through the study of its past. In turn, the construction of the feeling of a Brazilian nation was part of the imperial government's civilizing project. It was necessary to build the history of Brazil after its independence, to know the nation, its colonial past, to build the Brazilian national identity. The monarchical state, together with the elite of Brazilian intellectuals, was dedicated to forging the national identity of Brazilians through the resources of education and culture.

In this perspective, Colégio Pedro II can be considered a strategic space where Doria and Coutto contributed to a didactic transposition of history. We refer to the scientific construction of history, that is, to the place where the process of producing a school history occurred, when spaces and times were created for teaching history in an articulated way to the construction of a scientific history that, in the Brazilian case, had as the privileged locus of the IHGB, where the history articulated with the construction of the national identity was thought and written. As we said earlier, intellectuals in charge of writing and teaching history in Brazil were part of the two institutions - Colégio Pedro II and Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute - in a unique articulation between academic history and school history.

One year after the Centenary of the Brazilian Independence, Pedro do Coutto published a book entitled *Pontos de história do Brasil*, in which he resumes aspects of the early period of the Republic, reviewing the historical figures and their action, a remarkable feature also in the texts he published in the magazine *Escola Primária*. Coutto is not affiliated with the IHGB and was more concerned with the orientation, apprehension and diffusion of his version by the primary teachers. It is noteworthy that Pedro do Coutto became a full professor at Colégio Pedro II only in 1925,

avored by the Rocha Vaz Reform, which raised almost all substitute professors of the school to the category of full professors.

## THE SCHOOL HISTORICAL NARRATIVE ABOUT INDEPENDENCE AND THE DIDACTIC TRANSPOSITION PROCESS

For Chevallard (1991), the production of school knowledge takes place at the interface between the didactic system, composed of teachers and students and the determined spheres of society, namely, representatives of the education system, militant teachers, parents of students, specialists in the subject that advocates for education, representatives of political bodies. This intersection zone is called the noosphere where mediation between the didactic system and its social environment would occur, in order to confer legitimacy on school knowledge through didactic transposition actions. The noosphere is a space of conflict and disputes, due to the definition of authorized school knowledge, which will respond more efficiently to society's demands. This process does not occur naturally, it is a social construction.

Guidelines published in the magazine *A Escola Primária* are located in the field of the noosphere. The editors chose historians, members of the IHGB, professors specialized in history to compose the number about the celebration of the centenary of independence in Brazilian primary schools. In this sense, historiographic texts and didactic guidelines were published. The guidelines are the result of didactic transposition, as they organize knowledge in a specific way and with an intention: to appropriate the commemoration of the hundred years of political emancipation to stimulate the construction of the consciousness of Brazil as a republican nation in the 20th century.

History teaching specialists, such as Jonathas Serrano and José Veríssimo, argued that in the early years of schooling, teachers should adopt methods that used different resources such as images, illustrated books, maps, photographs and prints. They had as reference the work of Augustine Fouillée, entitled *Le tour de la France par deux enfants* (1871). This was a small illustrated book dedicated to childhood with knowledge of history, geography, morals, civics and sciences that conveyed the message about the uniqueness of France, simple and strong. This book had a circulation of thousands of copies that were distributed in schools and had as one of its main points the colorful and varied images.

In Brazil, the prefecture of the Federal District created an illustrated album to celebrate the first centenary of the Independence of Brazil. In this album, ephemerides of all kinds were published: historical characters, recently paved streets, automobiles, streetlights and traffic lights, sumptuous buildings and natural landscapes of the Paris of the tropics. The album was not distributed to our schools.

The pedagogical guidelines developed for the celebration of the centenary published in *A Escola Primária* did not suggest the use of any pedagogical material. It is believed that they took into account the precariousness of our schools in the early 20th century.

The General Directorate of Public Instruction summoned its immediate collaborators to a meeting in which the best way for that municipal department to commemorate the passage of September 7, 1922 was decided. The projects of this conspicuous assembly were, a priori, subordinate to the short term of execution.

Recognizing this, one of the school inspectors, one of the directors of *A Escola Primária* - presented a proposal endorsed by almost all of his colleagues, which, in summary, formulated an indication of suitable equipment for primary schools in the capital of the Republic - in buildings, teaching staff and school supplies - as the best way to celebrate the first centenary of our political emancipation on the part of the Municipal Public Education Directorate (A melhor comemoração, 1922, p. 1).

The didactic actions published in *A Escola Primária* were centered on the narrative of historical facts by the teacher to his/her class. Therefore, the analysis of this category will be significant for understanding the process of appropriation by the school history of the historiographic views disseminated by Pedro do Coutto and Escragolle Dória on Brazilian political emancipation.

An important aspect in the construction of the narrative, whether historiographical or scholarly, is the chronological organization of the facts. The guidelines contained a schedule of activities. The didactic works to celebrate the centenary of independence would take place on the following days: May 4, June 3, August 1 and September 7, 1922. On May 4, the teacher should start with a retrospective of facts that could not be worked on their respective dates, as the students were on school holidays. These facts were the 'Episode of *Fico*' (January 9), the entry of José Bonifácio to the government (January 16) and the call of the provincial attorneys for the meeting in Rio de Janeiro (February 16).

The school historical narrative also presupposed the presentation of the facts in a civic calendar. Each historical fact should be narrated and celebrated on the date it occurred. It is possible to identify the intention to build a chain of facts, the elaboration of a logical sequence. At each presentation the teacher should do a retrospective. Actions such as recalling, reviewing and remembering were suggested to start all narratives.

Like the historiographic text produced at the beginning of the 20th century, the didactic proposal presented the facts in a linear and progressive order. Historians intended to justify the process that led the nation to development and

progress. According to Pimenta (2009, p. 55), Brazilian historiography until 1930 understood our independence and the formation of our National State as a process that involved ruptures and continuities “[...] that would make it superior in relation to other similar ones occurred around him at the same time”. The greatest representative of this production was Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagem, author of *História geral do Brasil* (1854) and *História da independência do Brasil* (1875), works endorsed by the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute (IHGB), and supported by Pedro do Coutto, Escragnole Doria and Ignácio Azevedo do Amaral. In this reading, the rupture between Portugal and Brazil was necessary, legitimate, productive, natural and orderly. The term revolution in a sense of revolt was not accepted.

For Varnhagem, all Portuguese colonization of America would be a predetermined path towards its great outcome, the result of a long and necessary evolution. Portugal would have prepared the creation and maturation of Brazil, which in the 19th century would appear, limited, civilized and promising because it was closely linked to a European ancestry. Independence, then, is a continuation process, conveyed to the traditional sense of emancipation (Pimenta, 2009, p. 62).

In historiography as well as in didactic transposition, the narrative proposes to be explanatory: narrating and explaining are considered synonymous. The construction of the narrative provides for a selection of the facts, as a significant synthesis of a certain time. The progressive order would facilitate the children’s understanding of the historical process, as it presented the facts in a gradual way, making it more understandable.

In his *Methodologia da história na aula primária* (1917), Jonathas Serrano argued that in elementary education as the primary need for history teaching, to determine the facts that should be presented to the child, as well as what aspect of each fact would be worked on. For Serrano, only facts that had a decisive influence on national development should be selected, because these would be essential for understanding today’s society and the spiritual forces that act in it. The objective of the subject was to provide students with an understanding of the values and ideals of their country and their time, in a dual character of men and citizens. Moral teachings and patriotism derive from historical knowledge, they would have as a greater purpose the construction of the feeling of community of which we would be part.

The pedagogical calendar proposed in *A Escola Primária* gives us evidence of the selected facts. It is possible to notice that the facts presented by Pedro do Coutto and Scragnole Dória were appropriated by the narrative suggested in *A Escola Primária*. The commonalities reveal aspects of dialogue between historians and

scholars of history teaching that result in the didactic transposition process. Nevertheless, the didactic version is dynamic, selective in relation to the data, has an explanatory chain, in a cause and effect relationship.

All reports begin with 'Dia do Fico'. It is interesting to note that Dória's text (1921) is entitled 'O Fico'. Other facts valued in the historical and school narratives were the entry of José Bonifácio to the government on January 16 and the call of the provincial attorneys to meet with Prince Dom Pedro, which occurred on February 16. In the pedagogical version, the role of José Bonifácio was valued.

On the 4th of May, the centenary of the 'Cumpra-se' decree should be celebrated. This fact is highly valued in Pedro do Coutto's text. In his narrative, teachers would emphasize the support received by Dom Pedro from the Chamber. The narrative presented as an ephemeris calendar also allows us to think that school culture stimulated the creation of symbols, a ritual that encouraged the creation of an imaginary about the historical process. On the days proposed for the celebration of the historical events that made up the process of political emancipation, the routine should be different. The activities would start with the graduation of the school and with the executions of the Brazilian National Anthem and the Flag Anthem by the students. In planning, 30 minutes were stipulated for this step. The narrative would be presented in the courtyard to all students before starting classes. There is no maximum time limit for this phase. At the end of the teacher's presentation, the Brazilian National Anthem should again be performed by the children. This ritual, which should be repeated every day of the independence celebration calendar, was a didactic strategy to create an intersection between narratives and civic education. Such intersections were cited in the historiographical texts published in the section 'Ideas e Fatos', which emphasized that the study of historical facts in primary school was also aimed at teaching love for the country.

On June 3, 1922, the commemoration of the Convocation of the Constituent Assembly was proposed. The narrative would begin with a reminder of the event celebrated on May 4. Also, on May 13, Dom Pedro received the title of 'Protector and perpetual defender of Brazil'. The constituents' claim should be presented as 'true emancipation'. The teacher should insist that

[...] the decree convening the Constituent Assembly as the true act of our emancipation, emphasizing that the consummation of independence only required an act in which the true situation of the country was defined in a suggestive episode to mark the advent of a new era in the eyes of the popular masses (Programa para a comemoração..., 1921, p. 250).

The teacher's narrative should explain that the adhesion of all provinces was essential to the emancipation process. The highlight that is suggested for the province of Pernambuco is interesting. The creation of the Brazilian Empire went through overcoming disagreements and dissent. In this report, people of Pernambuco concentrated this resistance.

José Bonifácio is given the leading role in this stage of the emancipation process.

To justify the calling of the Constituent Assembly only for June 3, the professor will remind that the Pernambuco adhesion achieved by the effort of Vasconcellos de Drumond, acting in accordance to and by order of José Bonifácio was only solemnly announced on June 2, 1822 (Programa para a comemoração..., 1921, p. 250).

On August 1, 1922, the celebration of the first official act of Dom Pedro as regent of the nation was proposed. In this regard, the role of the provinces continued to be highlighted. Among the actions was that the teacher should read aloud to his/her students the following excerpt from the document that the prince addresses to the provinces:

Teachers should repeat to their disciples some of the most expressive passages of that political document, at least its beginning, through the phase of a celebrated proclamation of the days of the French revolution. The time for deceiving men is over and its conclusion, where the purpose of independence is unashamedly formulated. Let no cry be heard among you other than Union! From Amazonas to Prata there is no resounding echo other than Independence! May all our provinces form the mysterious beam that no force can break. Other concerns disappear for good, replacing the love of the general good with that of any province or city (Programa para a comemoração..., 1921, p. 252).

In the didactic context, reading the document would not only have the purpose of attributing the scientific character, in a positivist perspective, but of reinforcing ideas. In the narrative proposed in *A Escola Primária*, it had the function of showing the rupture with the Portuguese would represent a new time: the birth of the Brazilian nation.

The pedagogical action planned for September 7th entitled 'Commemoration of the 1st. Centenary of the Ypiranga episode' ended the narrative. The title clearly conveyed the view that this date should not be seen as a more valued moment, just as a fact that integrated the emancipatory process. The view that independence was not established exclusively on September 7, 1921 is another factor appropriated in the texts by Pedro do Coutto and Escragnolle Doria.

Activities of this day should be divided into two stages. The first was the homage with prayers to the martyrs of the Brazilian independence, namely, Phelipe dos Santos, Tiradentes and Domingos Martins. The second was the remembrance of all the facts that preceded the Ypiranga episode, with the actions of several historical characters. In the end, the report on the episode of ‘Independence or death’.

The conclusion was entitled ‘The advent of the Republic and its greatest triumphs’. The professor should make an exhibition about the Brazilian evolution in the first century of independence through the selection of facts representative of each political stage that would build the logical sequence towards progress: abdication of Dom Pedro would represent the First Reign, the regency period should be symbolized by the reestablishment of order, the second reign would have the prominence of adulthood, the abolition of slavery and the advent of the Proclamation of the Republic and “[...] the greatest triumphs, constituted for the closing of our borders and the settlement of our national and international disputes gloriously completed thanks to the genius of Rio Branco” (Programa para a comemoração..., 1921, p. 253). The progressive school historical narrative about the process of Brazilian political emancipation was in the final part. The guidelines directed the teachers to emphasize, accentuate, insist, certain historical actions for the school historical narration. With small, interlinked texts, it followed the logic of presenting the beginning, the middle and the end. After that, it would be the civic closure with the performance of the Independence Anthem by the students.

## DISPUTING NARRATIVES

Historians and history professors argued that primary education should focus on national history. This encompassed a huge variety of events and characters, which would require an accurate selection. Laville (1999, p. 126) stated that the main didactic device used in this period was the narrative composed of

[...] select facts, strong moments, decisive stages, great characters, symbolic events, from time to time some gratifying myths. Each piece of this narrative had its importance and was carefully selected.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the role of history teaching was associated with the construction of feeling towards the nation. The primary school had a prominent role in this process, as it reached an age group corresponding to the formation of moral values. In the eyes of Ignácio Azevedo do Amaral (1921, p. 253), the choice of historical characters should be judicious:

The choice of these symbolic figures should obey, as we have conditionally insisted, that they be significant types with the indispensable ability to suggest the ideas that they should represent, and requires a meticulous study of the pages of our history, oriented according to the fundamental principle of our public instruction policy and the corollaries resulting from it, among

which stand out the waiver of any claims of an imperialist policy and the need to be international relations between our country and the different foreign powers dictated by the harmony or antagonism of economic interests.

The letters section of *A Escola Primária* of the December edition of the year in which the Program for the commemoration of the first centenary of independence was published, is an interesting source for analyzing the disputes around the definition of a school historical narrative about this fact, in particular the choice of historical subjects. In this edition, the letter of Osório Duque Estrada, teacher at Colégio Pedro II, poet and literary critic was published. He was a member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters. On the eve of the centenary of independence, his poem was made official as lyrics of the Brazilian National Anthem. In his letter, Osório Duque Estrada contested part of the program, namely, the narrative about the convening of the Constituent Assembly and the leading role attributed to José Bonifácio:

This part of the program cannot remain, because it is biased towards responding Barboza Lima (a Pernambuco publicist opposed to José Bonifácio) imposing a humiliation on the teaching staff of Pernambuco, falsifies, once again, the history of independence, already so often fantasized, and seeks also undo the point in my memory in which I leave marked the formal opposition of José Bonifácio to the summons of the constituent - decisive step for our political emancipation - and of initiative of Gonçalves Ledo, and not of the supposed patriarch, as stubbornly and obstinately one wants to do to believe (Duque Estrada, 1921, p. 384).

Duque Estrada's criticism made clear the dispute between the characters who should compose the narrative about Brazil's independence. In his view, the action of Gonçalves Ledo should be valued, as opposed to José Bonifácio. Within the scientific parameters for writing the history of his time, he justified his claim by transcribing Viscount Sapucahy's speech:

Finally, the decree of June 3 appeared, and it was not even written by Sir Bonifácio, because we know that it was all from Sir Ledo's pen, such was his desire to make Brazil independent (Duque Estrada, 1921, p. 384).

Duque Estrada argued that the speech had never been challenged as a historical document. He also reinforced his preference for Gonçalves Ledo, with an excerpt from Varnhagen's work entitled *História da independência*:

It was Ledo who was responsible for writing and pronouncing the request to the Prince and began by saying: Lord, public salvation, the integrity of the nation, the decorum of Brazil, and the glory of V.A.R., urge, need and imperiously command that V.A.R. to convene a general assembly of representatives of the provinces of Brazil as soon as possible (Duque Estrada, 1921, p. 384).

In the end, Osório Duque Estrada stated that the release of the version that praised José Bonifácio would arouse the rivalry between the States, as he attributed to the province of Pernambuco the delay in calling the assembly. In the process of didactic transposition, historians work to cut short excerpts from speeches, which will be representative of historical characters. That will ensure space in the national memory. When looking at Osório Duque Estrada excluding Gonçalves Ledo and attributing to the province of Pernambuco the delay in convening the Constituent Assembly could provoke conflict, attesting his concern with what would be disclosed in primary schools, such as the strength of this segment. Several issues were at stake in historiographical perspective: the definition of the protagonists of independence, the memory of the facts, the role of the provinces and the idea of nation.

Ignácio Azevedo do Amaral, author of *José Bonifácio* (1917), countered the criticisms of Osório Duque Estrada, stating that the narrative about the fact that José Bonifácio would have been the protagonist on June 3 was a 'historical truth', proven by documentation published by Mello Moraes in *História do Brasil Reino e do Brasil Império*. Therefore, it was not possible to criticize that the choices of facts were biased to compose the narrative about Brazil's independence.

The debate established between Ignácio Azevedo do Amaral and Osório Duque Estrada demonstrate the disputes over the narrative that would be presented in schools about the Brazilian independence. However, they do not deviate from the reading proposed by Varnhagem. It is possible to see the investments they made in the didactic transposition process, using the same rigor as the scientific one used in their research. This reveals the importance attributed to teachers in the role of building a national identity considered safe, which contemplates the values authorized by the academy:

In the hands of today's master that the future of our country is therefore found and, particularly, national security, as we should not forget that the mission of the professors is not limited to the task of instructing the ignorant through the greater or lesser transmission of the sum of knowledge. Teacher has the noblest and highest function, the education of the mentality, the heart and the character of our people (Duque Estrada, 1921, p. 253).

Intellectuals recognize the role of the teacher in teaching history. There is a concern to convince the teacher, as he/she will carry out the narrative. Admiration for the character will depend on the teacher, the tone of voice of the teacher when pronouncing the character's name, the expression of the teacher's face, the emotion he/she will attribute to the facts. So, it was very important that the teacher not only had access to the most recent studies developed by historians, but that they presented good arguments. On the other hand, studies by Chevallard (1991) highlight that the teacher's autonomy is limited, because it is not his/her choice that the knowledge produced in the classrooms is updated based on the academy's references. If there is a distancing, legitimacy of school knowledge starts to be questioned by parents, specialists and representatives of the State.

Thus, disputes over school history knowledge are justified because it is an important space for their views to be consolidated. The historian has a guaranteed space in this process. Once the narrative was established, it would be repeated many times for several generations, contributing to the construction of memory about facts and characters, from phrases, titles and images.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Detienne (2013, p. 37) highlights Barrès' formula, citing that in order to found a nation, a cemetery and history teaching are needed. Representations will be evoked from the dead, the past that will perpetuate in the present. The teacher has a key role. So, it was a national duty "[...] to convince teachers to judge things as historians rather than as metaphysicians". The memory duty will be fulfilled for many people through their recalls, their highlights, the titles that will be charged in the tests, the repetition of names and facts. Rituals and honors are also part of this process.

The guidelines for primary teachers show the importance of teaching history in primary school. We think this is related to the perception that historians and intellectuals had that the vision of independence worked with students would be fundamental for the consolidation of an idea of nation, at a time when this construction was still a challenge.

The analysis of the didactic transposition revealed important relationships that were established between those who produced history and those who were responsible for teaching historical content with the establishment of the republican regime. In this sense, we identified that the vision of the Brazilian political emancipation process taught in schools was built amidst many disputes over several years. We noticed the permanence of agents and agencies that had an active participation in this construction since the monarchical period, such as Colégio Pedro II and the IHGB. The disputes over the narratives, namely, the choice of facts

and historical subjects undertaken by intellectuals renowned by Osório Duque Estrada, Ignácio Azevedo do Amaral, Pedro do Coutto and Escragnolle Doria scale the valuation of history taught in primary schools. There was an investment by these agents in the elaboration of the history that should be taught in our primary schools, and this should be in line with the knowledge authorized by the academy. The conceptions constructed by Varnhagem prevailed. The historiographical disputes surrounding the school historical narrative were clear. In this sense, the idea that only in secondary education there was investment in the sciences of reference in the preparation of curricula for the subjects has not been confirmed.

It was possible to perceive the rupture with the logic of a homeland history guided only by sacred aspects that characterized historical school teaching in the monarchic period. The analysis of the narrative presented to the teachers showed that in the republican period in primary school, practices that were restricted to extolling the heroes of the country were not defended. The idea of teaching history that is restricted or privileges moral and civic aspects had undergone changes in its format. Although what was being proposed was in line with a civic celebration, the elaboration of the content to be worked on these dates was broader. The content exposed to the masters of primary education presented political emancipation through facts worked in a logic in the scientific molds of its time, to justify that our country was moving towards progress on an irreversible scale, in a notion of evolutionary historical time, which would have started with the actions of 'Dia do Fico', but it had not yet ended. In this sense, it was necessary for the new generations to take ownership of the real sense of political independence, which would determine the direction of the nation.

When identifying the suggested practices for the celebration of the centennial anniversary, we verify the importance of the narrative. We attribute this aspect to the material precariousness of our schools, since specialists in history teaching of the period, such as Jonathas Serrano and José Veríssimo, defended the use of other resources such as images, maps, engravings, postcards and projections. The teacher's narrative, however, is the central element. However, it is built for school history: the timely selection of facts, the presentation as a civic calendar, the sequence. The guidelines indicate actions such as insisting, stressing, emphasizing, repeating and highlighting that they would be essential for the narration to reach the proposed objectives. The subjects and historical facts were defined with catch phrases and titles that were a reference for many years in studies on political emancipation: 'The Patriarch of Independence', 'O Dia do Fico', 'Independence or death' and so many, that helped build a memory that spread throughout the nation's schools.

Finally, we highlight the space that history teaching had in primary education. In line with other areas of study such as readings, exercises, narratives,

history occupied a significant place in the curriculum of primary school, which was not restricted to literacy and teaching mathematical operations.

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