

PORTS AND PORT CITIES: A FEW HISTORIOGRAPHIC CONSIDERATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This article presents considerations about the historiography related to the Pereira Passos reforms and the works of the port of Rio de Janeiro. Initially, it presents the studies that focused on the Brazilian port cities from the second half of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century. In the fundamental argumentation, we criticize the revisionism present in the most recent works on the subject.

KEYWORDS

Historiography – port cities – Rio de Janeiro.

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PORTOS E CIDADES PORTUÁRIAS: ALGUMAS CONSIDERAÇÕES HISTORIOGRÁFICAS

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RESUMO

O presente artigo apresenta considerações acerca da historiografia relacionada à chamadas Reforma Pereira Passos e às obras do porto do Rio de Janeiro. Inicialmente apresenta os estudos que enfocaram as cidades portuárias brasileiras no período compreendido entre a segunda metade do século XIX e o início do XX. Na argumentação fundamental, fazemos uma crítica ao revisionismo presente nos trabalhos mais recentes sobre o tema.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Historiografia – cidades portuárias – Rio de Janeiro.

1. Introduction

Initially, the long tradition of studies that one might consider related to Brazilian ports is easily perceived as having chosen as main focus port movements or, mainly, commercial flows between Brazilian and foreign ports, especially the Portuguese, having as strong influence the superb works of Labrousse³ and Chau-nu⁴, or even Charles Boxer⁵, Frederic Mauro⁶ and Magalhães Godinho⁷, the latter related to the Portuguese Colonial Empire.

When it comes to Brazil, there is a tradition of studies about the commercial movement in the country. Besides the most traditional, such as Corcino Medeiros Santos⁸, a brilliant thesis by José Jobson Arruda⁹, which uses the suppositions from French Serial History in order to give Fernando Novais¹⁰ thesis more materiality, depicts remarkably well the focus directed to port movement in the colonial period.

Novais' pioneering spirit in pointing out the connection between the old colonial system and the primitive accumulation of capital in the wake of the mercantile expansion and the impact on colonial ports deserves to be highlighted. For that and other reasons, it has become a classic on the matter.

3 LABROUSSE, Ernest. *Esquisse du mouvement de prix et de revenus en France au XVIII siècle*. Paris: Dalloz, 1933.

4 CHAUNU, Pierre. *Seville et l'Atlantique (1504-1650)*. Paris: SEVPEN, 1960-1965.

5 BOXER, Charles. *O Império Marítimo Português*. Lisboa: Edições 70, 1978.

6 MAURO, Frederic. *Portugal, o Brasil e o Atlântico*. Lisboa: Estampa, 1989. 2 v.

7 GODINHO, Vitorino Magalhães. *Os Descobrimentos e a economia mundial*. Lisboa: Presença, 1963-1970. 4 v.

8 SANTOS, Corcino Medeiros. *O Rio de Janeiro e a conjuntura atlântica*. Rio de Janeiro: Expressão e Cultura, 1993.

9 ARRUDA, José Jobson. *O Brasil no comércio colonial*. São Paulo: Ática, 1980

10 NOVAIS, Fernando Antônio. *Portugal e o Brasil na Crise do Antigo Sistema Colonial*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 1980.

However, such studies are not simply restricted to the movement of exportation and importation and, in a few cases, to the cabotage and slave trade, but they also focused on the modern period and, regarding Brazil, on the colonial period. That was how economic historians dealt with the ports!

More recently, Ricardo Zimbrão de Paula and his pupils regarding the port movement in the 19th century Maranhão also deserves high praise. The quantitative data it surfaces allows us to realize not only the movement, but also the characteristics of imported and exported goods in the region, including the movement of interprovincial commodities¹¹.

It is imperative to highlight that such studies – probably due to their own restrictions to the colonial period or to the subsequent post-Independence period, and to following the historiographic trends of the period – did not dwell on the analysis of port infrastructure, production processes, labor processes nor port operations as a whole, which does not demerit them. On the contrary, they must be considered fundamental to the study of the Brazilian economy and its insertion in the global economy in their respective periods.

Still deserving of the spotlight are the variety of studies that are currently being carried out in Brazil and abroad – most of which articulated with American universities – regarding inbound slave trade to Brazil. Due to the volume of works and their quality, they would be deserving of a specific historiographic assessment, which extrapolates the limits of this short paper.

¹¹ PAULA, Ricardo Zimbrão A. de; MELO SILVA, Mario Roberto. O comércio marítimo do Maranhão no século XIX. *Heera, Juiz de Fora*, v. 4, p. 131-145, 2009.

2. *Brazilian ports in perspective*

With regard to Brazilian ports in general, except for the case of Rio de Janeiro, which requires a separate reflection, the works of Rita Rosado¹², Maria da Penha Siqueira¹³ and Maria Lucia Gitahy¹⁴ about the ports of Salvador, Santos and Vitoria have to be remarked for their groundbreaking approach to the topic.¹⁵

The issue of ports is especially important if we consider that the main port cities were fiscal, legal and political-administrative power *loci*, being a strategical enclave for the construction of the Brazilian Nation State, due to the Customs in there located. The National Customs was the tax office responsible for most of the income that constructed the state apparatus and funding bodies for Brazilian agro exporters.

Let's take as a starting point Rita Rosado's work¹⁶, which was her initial master thesis. Her work introduces the constitution process of Salvador's port, using mainly legal and cartographic sources and a variety of projects aimed at improving the city's port, ranging from the 19th century up to until the construction of the modern port in the early 20th century. Despite its focus on the 19th century and on the frustrated projects rather than on the actual material advancements of said port operation, it still stands as a work of reference for those who are dedicated to analyzing the case of Salvador or for those who

12 ROSADO, Rita de Cassia S. de C. O Porto de Salvador: modernização em projeto (1854-1891). 1983. Dissertação (Mestrado em Ciências Sociais) – Universidade Federal da Bahia, Salvador, 1983.

13 SIQUEIRA, Penha. O desenvolvimento do Porto de Vitória (1870-1940). Vitória: Codesa, 1984.

14 GITAHY, Maria Lúcia Caira. Ventos do mar. São Paulo: Ed. Unesp; Santos: Prefeitura Municipal de Santos, 1992.

15 In regard to Customs, a PhD dissertation is underway by Jussara França in the Economic History Post-Graduation Programme (USP).

16 ROSADO, Rita de Cassia S. de C. Op. Cit.

seek to understand the complex legal-political process that shrouded the issue in the country.

Maria da Penha Siqueira's book, which derived from her PhD dissertation from USP, stands out for its originality as it analyzes the relation between the development of the port in Vitoria and its impact on the process of urbanization in the city, particularly after its modern construction began in the early 20th century. Her work also became an essential reference, not only for those committed to the history of Espírito Santo, but also to anyone who aims at understanding the relationship between port and city.¹⁷

In terms of works dedicated to studying Brazilian ports, Alcides-Goularti Jr.¹⁸'s also deserves high praise, especially the case of Santa Catarina. Although the perspective in his work is closer to an economist's – which at times leads to his disregard of a few primary sources, in addition to failing to bring focus to some key historical factors in the short-fallen attempts at institutionalizing the responsibility over national ports –, it can also be considered a reference for specialists on the subject.

Gitahy's work¹⁹ – which constitutes the most fundamental piece of his PhD dissertation deriving from his master's thesis – is imperative in regard to Santos. It is a pioneer take on the port of Santos and its labor movement. The author follows the tracks of globalizing Social History and puts together a remarkable panel on the constitutional process of the Companhia Docas de Santos and the urbanization that followed the construction of the port through an analysis of the labor movement development in the city during the First Brazilian Republic. Beyond that, Gitahy's work followed on the same path as

17 SIQUEIRA, Penha. Op. Cit.

18 GOULARTI FILHO, Alcides. *Portos, ferrovias e navegação em Santa Catarina*. 1. ed. Florianópolis: Ed. UFSC, 2013.

19 GITAHY, Maria Lúcia Caira. Op. Cit.

Ingrid Sarti²⁰ and Fernando Silva's²¹ and became fundamental reference source in the studies on port labor movements in Santos and further ports as well.

Although not widely publicized, Alessandro Gomes' PhD dissertation about the Port of Recife and the debate between continuous and dock piers²² is worth mentioning. We object to Gomes' conception of "docks", however. Throughout the 18th century the "docks" had plural and idealized definitions. Thus, its concept should not be seen linearly. The formulation of these projects for new port constructions or enhancement was a topic in dispute. The author contrasts English, New-York and continuous pier docks in a naturally successive manner, as was the common view then, which is improper since they were proposed in the same period of time and argued for and against at the same ports for different interests.

Presumably, one of the latest academic works on ports and port cities was published, deriving from a Colloquium that took place in Salvador, entitled "Histories and Port Spaces"²³, which contemplates great works on the historiography and studies in regard to Salvador and Ilhéus, as well as Rio de Janeiro, Santos and Vitória, in a multiplicity of aspects.

Lastly, we would like to use this opportunity to point out Leal's²⁴ and Rosado's²⁵ papers contained in the book as referenced below.

20 SARTI, Ingrid. *O Porto Vermelho: os estivadores santistas nos sindicatos e na política*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1981.

21 TEIXEIRA, Fernando. *A Carga e a culpa*. São Paulo: Hucitec, 1995.

22 GOMES, Alessandro Felipe de Meneses. *Das docas de comércio ao cais contínuo: as tentativas frustradas de melhoramento do Porto do Recife no Oitocentos*. 2016. Tese (Doutorado em História). Universidade Federal de Pernambuco, Recife, 2016.

23 CRUZ, Maria Cecília Velasco et al. (Orgs.). *Histórias e espaços portuários: Salvador e outros portos*. Salvador: Ed. UFBA, 2016.

24 LEAL, Maria das Graças de Andrade. *O Trapiche Barnabé no contexto portuário da Salvador do século XVIII ao XX*. In: CRUZ, Maria Cecília Velasco et al. Op. Cit. p. 77-122.

25 ROSADO, Rita de Cássia S. de Carvalho – *A Modernização do Porto de Salvador da Primeira República*. In: CRUZ, Maria Cecília Velasco et al. Op. Cit. p. 159 -198.

The former tells the history of Trapiche Barnabé, from its inception throughout the construction process of the port of Salvador, making use of an array of sources and a pertinent bibliography. It presents a remarkable analysis while also dwelling on the collapse of the port and the need for the construction of a new one. Rosado, by her turn, continues with her researches and moves forward with her former works, standing as the greatest reference regarding the projects and construction of the port, setting her paper as indispensable reading for those who are interested in the topic.

3. *The case of Rio de Janeiro*

Understanding the historiography related to Rio de Janeiro in its process of transformation from outdated and accordance to its colonial traits – as well as the city’s – to modern port amidst a large urban reform is of great interest to us.

In the early 1980’s, what seemed like a promising wave of studies on the theme, following or at least influenced by the works of Eulalia Lobo²⁶ and Maurício Abreu²⁷, spawned seminal works on urban history and the matter of the port and port region in Rio de Janeiro that were subsequently abandoned due to the changes in historiography itself. It’s not a coincidence that we shall dwell a little on such period’s works.

26 Among others: LOBO, Eulalia. *História do Rio de Janeiro: do capital comercial ao capital financeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Ibmecc, 1978. 2 v.

27 ABREU, Maurício. *A evolução urbana do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2000.

The works of Osvaldo Porto Rocha²⁸, Jaime Benchimol²⁹, Sidney Chalhoub³⁰, Sergio Lamarão³¹, Marli Albuquerque³² and Cruz³³ are worth mentioning. Rocha's³⁴ book incorporates the analysis of the major urban reforms by Pereira Passos, with emphasis being placed on the destruction of popular dwellings of strong influence in Engels'³⁵ and Hobsbawm's³⁶ work. Nonetheless, the author draws a characterization – however small – of the Cidade Nova region in its last chapter, while pointing out diverse cultural aspects from the region where we can find a significant presence of ports.

Jaime Benchimol's work, which was originally his own master's thesis, is one of the fundamental texts to understand the urban transformations through which Rio de Janeiro was going through under the administration of Pereira Passos. It makes use of a wide array of sources and has a holistic view of History, written to the *Annales* school's content.

28 ROCHA, Osvaldo Porto. *A Era das Demolições*. Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca Carioca: Prefeitura da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro, 1995.

29 BENCHIMOL, Jaime. *Pereira Passos: Um Haussmann tropical*. Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca Carioca, 1992

30 CHALHOUB, Sidney. *Trabalho, lar e botequim: o cotidiano dos trabalhadores no Rio de Janeiro da belle époque*. 2. ed. Campinas: Ed. Unicamp, 2001.

31 LAMARÃO, Sergio. *Dos trapiches ao porto*. Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca Carioca: Prefeitura da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro, 1991.

32 ALBUQUERQUE, Marli. *Trabalho e conflito no Porto do Rio de Janeiro (1904/1920)*. 1983. Tese (Doutorado em História) – Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 1983.

33 CRUZ, Maria Cecília Velasco. *Virando o jogo: estivadores e carregadores no Rio de Janeiro na Primeira República*. 1998. Tese (Doutorado) – Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 1998.

34 ROCHA, Osvaldo Porto. *Op. Cit.*

35 ENGELS, Frederich. *A Situação da classe operária inglesa*. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2008

36 Among others: HOBBSAWM, Eric. *Da Revolução Industrial Inglesa ao Imperialismo*. Rio de Janeiro: Forense Universitária, 1986. Além da sétima edição da série: *Era das Revoluções, Era dos Impérios e Era do Capital*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 2002.

Sidney Chalhoub³⁷, in turn, stems from English Marxism, particularly from Edward Thompson's³⁸ work, and seeks to retrieve the daily lives of workers, having as emphasis those in the port region of Rio de Janeiro. The pioneering spirit of his master's thesis due to its approach and sources at hand must be highlighted in this short historiographic assessment. Later on, the author himself published another excellent work on Social History in Rio de Janeiro, with emphasis on its port region³⁹.

However, Sergio Lamarão and Marli Albuquerque's master theses undoubtedly warrant higher attention. In the former, which has been made into a book, the use of unprecedented sources regarding the process of dispute for the transformation of the port of Rio de Janeiro has brought to light, for the first time, the long and complex process of projecting and establishing a new port in the city. Starting in the early 19th century, when the court was located in the city and Rio suffered the impact of a large flow of international shipments, the author points out the betterments and setbacks of the imperial government and national and foreign businessmen – using legal sources, charts, etc. – in the attempt to equip the city with a modern port, which culminated with Rodrigues Alves' project to undertake the construction. Due to its high quality, it is still essential reference for those studying the matter.

The latter, about the Dockers' Union, is also mandatory source for the analysis of the port workers' movement in Rio de Janeiro, its labor process and the 20th century port dynamics itself, when the port construction was under way. It is unfortunate that such high quality and extremely original work is still unpublished in a book, which hinders its access by scholars of the topic.

37 CHALHOUB, Sidney. Op. Cit.

38 Among others: THOMPSON, Edward P. *A formação da classe operária inglesa*. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1987.3 v.

39 CHALHOUB, Sidney. *Cidade febril*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996.

Similar words could be said about Cruz's PhD dissertation from the Universidade de São Paulo, in the Sociology Department⁴⁰. When accessing said work, we are met with the fact that it is split into two parts. The first related to the implantation process of the port in Rio de Janeiro; the second associated with the dock workers' movement, following in Albuquerque's footsteps⁴¹.

We shall dwell longer on the first part, as this is where the author proposes to analyze the constitution of the port of Rio de Janeiro. The author stems from a premise that one might classify as evolutionist, as it defends that a long and almost linear expansion process happened, along with changes and adaptations made to the port from the arrival of the Portuguese Court in 1808 until the inauguration of the first phase in 1910.

One might even conclude from reading her thesis that she disregards the "trial and error" nature in the different experiences in the Court's port operation, in their ever shifting infrastructures, in the contradictions in their own political-legal regulation, or even in their institutional intricacies.

From our standpoint, the author fails to notice the persistent "hampering" in Rio's port operation, which leads her to believe that its evolution was *paripassu* to the demands surrounding its movement. What results from that premise is a conclusion that neglects the historical character of a port operation proposition in new material bases. All in all, a view that ignores the revolutionary nature in the construction process of a capitalist port seems misguided⁴².

40 CRUZ, Maria Cecília Velasco. Virando o jogo... Op. Cit.

41 Besides ALBUQUERQUE, Marli. Op. Cit., a PhD dissertation was recently defended by ARANTES, Erika Bastos. O porto negro: trabalho, cultura e associativismo dos portuários no Rio de Janeiro na virada do XIX para o XX. 2008. Tese (Doutoramento). Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, 2008.

42 Such theoretical perspective is more evident in the paper published in *Revista Tempo*: CRUZ, Maria Cecília Velasco. O Porto do Rio de Janeiro no século XIX: uma realidade de muitas faces. *Tempo*, Niterói, n 8, ago. 1999.

We can also mention Lérica Povoreli's⁴³ PhD thesis which, although defended in 2001, sticks to the previous historiographic trend. The author uses her work to analyze the impact of the transformations occurred during the Vargas government (1930-1945) – especially in regard to the construction of the so called second phase of the Port of Rio de Janeiro, from the Canal do Mangue to Ponta do Caju – in the economy of Rio.

It is also worthy of note that the subsequent decades have seen at least three very distinct trends arise in regard to the Port Region and the city of Rio de Janeiro: a) urban studies in Rio, in which the port issue was set as part of a whole⁴⁴; b) those that dwelled on social movements, such as the Vaccine Revolt and the Union's Movement⁴⁵; and c) cultural studies involving literature and cultural manifestations of all kinds in which, despite having the port region and its workers at its core, the port-city relations serve as a mere background for the history⁴⁶.

All of these trends eventually fail to consider the central aspect of the port in the construction and structuring of Rio's society and even of the city itself, especially during the period which ranged until the late 1950s, in addition to the aspects in relation to urban structure and the impact of port activity operations on the social-economic dynamics of the city.

Scholars who have dedicated themselves to rebuilding Rio's social history, especially between the end of the 19th century and the

43 POVORELI, Lérica. O Porto do Rio de Janeiro na estratégia do desenvolvimento da relação capitalista no Brasil: economia e política de transporte no primeiro governo Vargas (1930-1945). 2001. Tese (Doutorado) – Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2001.

44 The bibliography is extensive, thus it is referenced a classic by ABREU, Mauricio. Op. Cit.

45 Among the multiple works in regard to such historiographic trend we point out: SEVCENKO, Nicolau. A Revolta da Vacina: mentes insanas em corpos rebeldes. São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1984, e a tese de ARANTES, Erika Bastos. Op.Cit.

46 Among many recent works we emphasize SILVA, Lucia. A Paris dos Trópicos e a Pequena África na Época do Hausmann Tropical. In SANGLARD, Gisele et alii (Orgs.). História urbana: memória, cultura e sociedade. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. FGV, 2013

beginning of the 20th, have given little thought to the port construction process, its social repercussion, and related matters, such as labor process, for instance.

When considering the cultural studies that are somehow connected to the port region or its agents, the deepest criticism is that in historiographic themes – with few honorable exceptions – there is a “detachment” from cultural production, in the social and economic dynamics – including the urban matter – that serve as foundation for such manifestations.

Additionally, we take into consideration a collection of books that strive for reproducing plenty of iconography – especially photos –, which present the history of Rio’s port region and are usually paid for by large enterprises. Among them, the one organized by Santos and Lenzi⁴⁷, and the other by Pinheiros and Rabha⁴⁸ are worth mention.

In the same scope, although with its distinctions, Maria Inez Turazzi’s two books deserve emphasis. The first one depicts a photo book of the construction of Rio’s port, with its main photos and a superb analysis. It is an important source for studies on the port construction process⁴⁹. The second⁵⁰ establishes a formidable course of the port from the colonial period until nowadays. Despite its aim at being an overview for non-specialist readers, it makes use of updated bibliographical sources and scarcely accessible documents and iconography.

When it comes to port studies in their specificity (companies, labor processes, urbanization etc.) the historiographic gap was – and still is – wide. Since the turn of the 1980s to the 1890s it has been my

47 SANTOS, Nubia M.; LENZI, Maria Isabel (Orgs.). *O Porto e a Cidade*. Rio de Janeiro: Casa da Palavra, 2005.

48 PINHEIRO, Augusto Ivan; RABHA, Nina. *Porto do Rio de Janeiro: construindo a modernidade*. Rio de Janeiro: Andrea Jakobsson Estúdio, 2012.

49 TURAZZI, Maria Inez. *Um porto para o Rio*. Rio de Janeiro: Casa da Palavra, 2012.

50 TURAZZI, Maria Inez. *Rio: um porto entre tempos*. Rio de Janeiro: Bazar do Tempo, 2016.

concern to research the Companhia Docas de Santos⁵¹ (Dock Company of Santos) and the implementation of its capitalist port complex. Back then, I came across many obstacles in finding national references besides the ones aforementioned.

More recently, we may perceive a significant international movement of port and port city studies that seek to grasp the multiple articulations and themes that make up for this scenario. That is the case of the international research group “Gobernanza de Puertos Atlánticos”, which gathers specialists from Europe, Latin America and Africa every year in an annual Colloquium and publishes the works presented and debated in there.

Beyond the scope of scientific meetings, international research networks dedicated to the theme are springing up. That is the case of the International Research Group “Puertos y Ciudades del Mundo Atlántico”, under Full Professor Miguel SUÁREZ Bosa (Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria – Spain) and my coordination. It has been developing integrated studies since 2002, and is financed by the Spanish government. Such research networks seek, on the one hand, to nurture comparative studies related to the so called “Atlantic World”. On the other hand, it aims at consolidating the perspective of a globalizing and cross-thematic history at its core.

Brazil, in turn, counts with two CNPq research groups that are dedicated to the theme: “Ports and Cities of the Atlantic World” and “The Atlantic World and African Diaspora”. Both organize scientific meetings frequently.

Deriving from these new perspectives, we would like to highlight Flávio Gonçalves dos Santos⁵² and Ricardo Moreno’s⁵³ books, which were originally PhD dissertations developed in the PPGH-UFF, re-

51 HONORATO, Cezar. *O polvo e o porto*. 2. ed. Curitiba: Prismas, 2016.

52 SANTOS, Flávio Gonçalves. *Economia e cultura do candomblé na Bahia: o comércio de objetos litúrgicos afro-brasileiros*. Ilhéus, BA: Editus, 2013.

53 PINHO, José Ricardo Moreno. *Açambarcadores e famélicos: fome, carestia e conflitos em Salvador (1858 a 1878)*. Salvador: Eduneb: CMS, 2016.

lated to the case of Salvador, and Thiago Mantuano's works – both his book and his recent master's thesis, focused on the case of Rio de Janeiro⁵⁴.

However, what would then be the distinction between this new production and the former? Firstly, it would be the centrality of the port in its multiple dimensions, which is to say they include the study of company histories, business agents, political processes, commercial networks, productive and work processes, or even characteristics of the cargo movement between the ship and the port in addition to the movement between the port and inland transportation. Moreover, in a broad and articulated way, it mingles all of these elements in search of a totalizing non-segmented history.

On that note, the city and its territorialities, as well as its people, constitute part of the analysis. The culture, the social composition and movements, the political representation of its agents, the capacity of economic development – in summary, the search for totality is the goal!

Furthermore, the perception that the analysis of concrete scenarios does not do without the articulation with the more general processes that are going on in the world, especially because of the specificity of port activities, is part of such distinction.

Theoretical and methodological influences are plural in said works, but still we can sense a strong presence of the English social history in the formulation of questions alongside studies that derive from political economy, geography and anthropology. After all, the port is a world in itself!

It's crucial to remember that we are dealing with ports and port cities, not only coastal towns, but those where port activities directly

54 MANTUANO DA FONSECA, Thiago Vinicius. Comendador Antônio Martins Lage: Entre a navegação e a operação portuária no século XIX. 2015. Dissertação (Mestrado). Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, 2017; MANTUANO DA FONSECA, Thiago Vinicius. O trapiche e suas fronteiras: a operação portuária pré-capitalista no Rio de Janeiro do século XIX. Rio de Janeiro: Autografia, 2015.

interfere in the city's configuration and its urban, social, economic and cultural dynamics. That in itself limits the issue to some Brazilian cities where the port is intrinsic in its existence.

That presents a problem to the historian by trade: we are coping with an ever-changing reality that is extremely rapid depending on the period. It is almost as if we had an equation with multiple unknowns – variables – and that, in every equation, there is a dialectical system that changes their results according to each of their values.

On the other hand, according to Lefebvre⁵⁵ and Harvey⁵⁶, a city is never ready: it is a reality in which its constitution is part of its own dynamics, especially when we take into account the capitalist cities where the speed of constructing, reconstructing and reinventing is of astounding, differently from most ancient cities – including our colonial cities – which change slowly, almost imperceptibly.

Such observations are even more meaningful when we focus on the transition from a colonial and slavery society to a capitalist-based one, in which territory becomes property and the movement of commodities – including workforce – is sped up on demand.

The question of ports can be perceived in a similar way. Even if we consider colonial ports, the need for its components' functions – shipments, transfer services, storage and loading or unloading of commodities, for instance – it is already a quite complex network of agents with their functions and interests.

When it comes to capitalist ports, such reality is even more convoluted because it directly involves local, national and international interests, besides the emergence of other economic and social sectors that directly or indirectly depend on port activities.

Therefore, it seems fundamental to us that in any aforementioned periods the analysis cannot be detached from the ebbs and tides

55 LEFEBVRE, Henri. *A cidade do capital*. Rio de Janeiro: DP&A, 1999.

56 HARVEY, David. *A produção capitalista do espaço*. 2. ed. São Paulo: Annablume: Hucitec: PMS, 2006.

that impact the international conjuncture or the general capitalist trends – especially when considering the post-colonial period. Also, we can state that the analysis of intrinsic processes in each port region is under direct influence of more general questions, especially in Latin-American scenarios.

If we must not neglect the colonial aspect in colonial ports as the major distinction in its meaning and existence – although the analysis of each concrete reality of colonial insertion must be considered –, that is of even greater importance when dealing with contemporary cases. After all, when we analyze the 10 intercontinental transport companies operating in Brazil since the end of the 19th century, for instance, we find that they are all huge companies from central capitalism⁵⁷.

We must also consider that the setting up of capitalism, at least in a few scenarios, is a long process full of ups and downs, with moments of greater inflection and hastening, and others which are slower, which is what the great Florestan Fernandes teaches us in his “The Bourgeois Revolution in Brazil”⁵⁸.

The fact that the introduction of a new capitalist port is a long-lasting process and, in a few cases, a process of dialogue between old port structures and new capitalist-based logics does not demerit the greater aspects we have pointed out as the rupture with the ongoing pre-capitalist model.

Such trial and error mechanism by some public institutions and, especially, by the Capital in projecting its industrial mindset on port operations took place all across the Atlantic. During the last quarter of the 19th century, from London to Dakar, passing through Lisbon, Rio de Janeiro and New York, traditional loading and unloading pro-

57 HONORATO, Cezar; FONSECA, Thiago Mantuano. Os agentes múltiplos do porto pré-capitalista (1879/1900). In: *Jornadas Internacionais e Interdisciplinares de Estudos Portuários*, 6., 2015, Rosario. *Anais Digitales...Rosario: REDEP*, 2015. v. 1., p. 48; HONORATO, Cezar; FONSECA, Thiago Mantuano. *A economia da região portuária do Rio de Janeiro (1870/1900)*. *Nuevo Mundo Mundos Nuevos*, [S. l.], Colóquios, dez. 2016.

58 FERNANDES, Florestan. *A Revolução Burguesa no Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 1975.

cedures were adapted and shaped into its productive process, which is connected to new labor processes that were mechanized by the increasingly intense pouring of capital on port infrastructures. That is largely due to the pressure exerted by the development of productive forces in transoceanic navigation.

The rupture with the existing model may have occurred continuously (as in London or New York) or abruptly (as in Lisbon or Marseille), but the course of history shows that the transforming powers of the Atlantic ports set the foundation for the realization of the Port Industrial Revolution.

It is imperative to bear in mind Marx's renowned observation that Capitalism is scarred by production anarchy due to every capitalist's multiple individual interests. Should we follow a Gramscian point of view, we might observe the existence, conflicts and comforts between different class groups and each of their struggles to transform their hegemonic project against a restrictive state through their activities. After all, ports have long been a matter of state!

As a result there is a compelling need for strong criticism regarding the sources used, having as basic premises the analyses of "who" is speaking, to "whom it is spoken and what media is being used". For example: Nivea Vieira, who studied the Trade Association of Rio de Janeiro (ACRJ), emphasizes that, depending on the conjecture, some different class groups were able to impose their arguments and make them ACRJ's dominant discourse. Also, ACRJ's omission was clear in other situations when it could not get a minimum of institutional unity⁵⁹.

Such criticism may also be applied to Cruz's⁶⁰ paper – which we have chosen due to it being the most recent one by a specialist dedi-

59 VIEIRA, Nivea Maria. ACRJ e o porto: definição e redefinição de políticas públicas para o porto do rio de janeiro. 2014. Tese (Doutoramento). Universidade Federal Fluminense, Niterói, 2014.

60 CRUZ, Maria Cecília Velasco. O cais do porto no crivo da política: a burguesia mercantil e a modernização portuária no Rio de Janeiro na Primeira República. In: CRUZ, Maria Cecília Velasco et al. Op. Cit. p.289 – 336.

cated to the case of Rio's port – in which many sources from ACRJ and the Transatlantic Navigation Center of Rio de Janeiro (CNTRJ) are used. The CNTRJ represented the interests of major international ship owners who were contrary to the monopolization of the new port, citing its small size and mainly the elevated cost of fares.

It is worth noting that the so called transatlantic navigation, as previously described, was composed of:

The largest ones are English (4) and German (3), but also Italian (3), French (2), Austrian (2) and Portuguese (1), and despite that they still carry out cabotage services in ports in Brazil's northeast, Santos and Rio da Prata. Brazilian companies by their turn, carry out river navigation and cabotage. Lloyd Brasileiro was the only one that left the Brazilian coast and made stops in the Southern Cone⁶¹.

It is enthralling to notice that in the preceding decades a giant sea company was actively involved in the construction of the New Port of Rio de Janeiro. André Rebouças presented *Liverpool, Brazil and River Plate Mail-Steamers* as Dom Pedro II Docks' main partner. Still in the 1960s the core of his argument – which could be countered in many ways, but it was both exaggerated and valid in some ways – was that the port of Rio de Janeiro presented a port operation that was unsuited for the company's new vessels and the growing port movement.

Looking into the proposition by D. Pedro II Docks, which was put forward by André Rebouças and endorsed by Liverpool, Brazil and River Plate Mail-Steamers, the matter is crystalline clear:

In order to ensure the company's positive revenue in England I have joined with Mistery Stephen Busk & C., honorable businessmen in the community who are keen on its success, as managers for Liverpool, Brazil and River Plate Mail-Steamers, an extremely important naviga-

⁶¹ HONORATO, Cezar; FONSECA, Thiago Mantuano. A economia da região portuária do Rio de Janeiro... Op. Cit., p.60.

tion company whose steamboats make up for the largest part of Rio's importation commerce. The loss due to the lack of proper wharves for their steamboats in Rio de Janeiro is beyond measure⁶².

Such stance would be taken for granted if historians had no perception about the progress and tessitura of the historical process. However, such approach is prohibitive for the historian, who has to grasp the multiple interests of the classes and their changes over time.

That conjectural shift was significant enough to determine such a radical change in the transatlantic navigation companies' stance regarding the construction of a new port in Rio de Janeiro.

It seems clear that the port in Rio has developed, improved, expanded and reproduced its operation between periods, even with that not representing a rupture with the previous commercial logics. However, as we would come to see later on, it is made even clearer that transatlantic navigation was revolutionized in such period. The enhancements and other works carried out until the end of the 19th century are proof of that.

62 REBOUÇAS, André. Companhia das docas de D. Pedro II nas enseadas da Saúde e da Gamboa no porto do Rio de Janeiro: publicação dos documentos que precederão e motivarão sua organização. Rio de Janeiro: Typ. de G. Leuzinger, 1871.p.14.

TABLE I
Port enhancements in the Port of Rio de Janeiro (19th century)

NEW PORT INFRASTRUCTURE	PROJECT - COMPLETION	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Customs Dock	1852-1877	Loading, unloading, storage and wharfage services in Rio's Customs. Conceded to a company referred by André Rebouças, in 1989, composed of a selection of wealthy traders (Mariano Procópio Ferreira Lage among them), incorporated to Rio's Customs Dock Company at a capital of 2.000:000\$0000. The company was shut down in 1871 and the services and construction works were back again under the division's jurisdiction.
Trade Dock	1865-1868	A metal-mechanic shipyard and first dry dock in the country of large capacity, property of Wilson Sons and a joint-stock at around 1.200 contos de réis;
Dom Pedro II Docks	1869-1877	Projected by André Rebouças with approximately 2600 meters worth of docks, had only 260 meters and 6 meters of draught come to fruition; it ensured English capital in the project, amounting to 1 million pounds that did not go through. It got incorporated at a capital of 6.000:000\$000.
Health Dock	1875-1881	Property of Englishmen William Finnie Kemp and Stanley Youle. Shipyard of 140 meters worth of mooring docks and 6 meters of draught;
Gamboa's Maritime Station	1876-1881	Project by Francisco Pereira Passos as head of EFDPII, it had the best infrastructure of its time (rail connected, 300-meter-long breakwater and 8 meters of draught at its deepest), accounting for all flow of coffee in the port back then.
Fluminense Grinding Mill	1883-1887	Under Carlos Gianelli's and Brazilian Francisco de Paula Mayrink's ownership, it had the capacity to grind 120 tons of wheat daily. It was incorporated at a capital value of 1.000:000\$000 and it also had a pier.

<p>English Grinding Mill</p>	<p>1886-1889</p>	<p>Large mill used for the making of flour for Rio Flour Mills & Granaries Company, it had a 145-meter dock at its disposal and a breakwater of metal structure in the shape of a T, in addition to up to 6.5 meters of draught, with a lifting device for the unloading of wheat and a transportation setup with moving treadmills leading to the silos where wheat was stashed. It got incorporated at a capital value of 250,000 pounds.</p>
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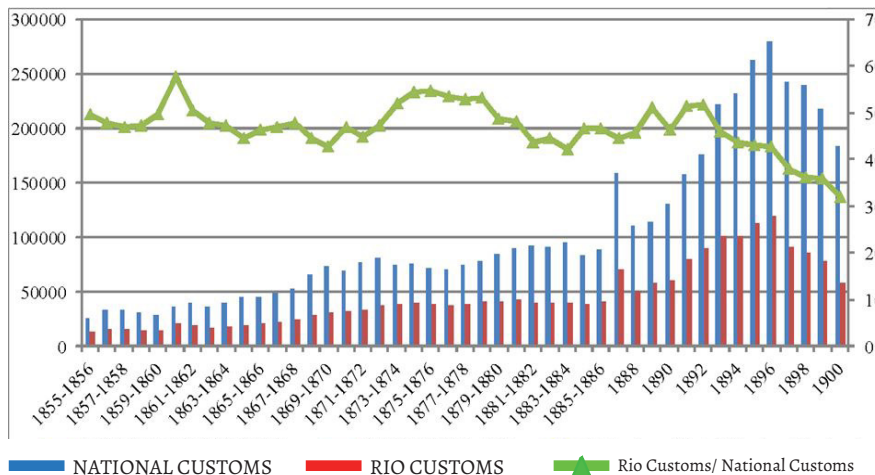
Source: ALMANAK ADMINISTRATIVO, MERCANTIL E INDUSTRIAL DA CORTE E PROVÍNCIA DO RIO DE JANEIRO (Almanaque Laemmert). Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia Laemmert, 1844-1900(annual); BRASIL. Coleção das Leis do Império do Brasil. Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1891; LISBOA, Alfredo. *Portos do Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: O Norte, 1922.

However, those enhancements were not effectively revolutionary, since there was no integration between the multiple agents and economic activities involved in loading and unloading operations; besides, the coordination of the compound was precarious and decentralized, with no autonomous port authorities that were amalgamated, with capabilities and prerogatives sufficiently concentrated throughout the 19th century.

Even though the work process already presented significant layering and segmentation then, it was still manual for its most part, while also being dependent on the worker's physical strength. Furthermore, workforce was basically on demand and knowledgeable about the various aspects of the operation. Such setting leads us to believe that – in accordance to Marx – it was a “machine manufacturing”, and not a process of capitalist production.

The significant decrease in port movement in Rio de Janeiro in relation to other ports corroborates such claim. The fluctuations in the international economy, the expansion of São Paulo's coffee trade and the epidemics in the city also contributed to said behavior.

CHART 1
Rio de Janeiro's Customs' corresponding income in relation to National Customs



Source (in contos de réis): BRASIL. Ministério da Agricultura, Indústria e Comércio. Diretoria do Serviço de Estatística. Finanças: Quadro Sinótico da Receita e Despesa do Brasil (período de 1822 a 1913). Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia do Ministério da Agricultura, 1914.

However, the primary topic that underlays the aforementioned imperial capitalist discourses is the criticism towards importation taxes and port operation costs implemented by the Federal Government in order to clear path for the construction and compensate new dealers.

In pushing to unload offshore, ship owners would clearly save on lodging fees, in addition to transferring operational costs to the importer. The traditional operation would loosen Custom control for importers of varied cargos, since there would be centralized taxation as a result of the expected operation monopoly at the new port.

That in nothing differs from the pressure by the Commercial Association of São Paulo towards creating a Customs in the capital aiming at reducing lodging time in Santos, which was dutifully denied by the Federal Government. The difference is that there was

no way of loading and unloading commodities off the Companhia Docas de Santos⁶³ operation area.

Such circumstances might account for the fact that the provisory nature of wharf movements towards the area reaching as far as Ponta do Caju eventually became permanent due to some bourgeois pressure, even after the completion of the first phase in 1910, as previously mentioned⁶⁴.

The lack of insight into imperialist capital interests and fractions of capital that operated in the port in the *expanded state*, and even in the *restricted space* leads to difficulties in the analysis. The interest in a modern port was obvious and can be seen in the referenced sources. What is at stake is not the need for the construction – which was unanimous – but who would “pay up” and who would manage the port, as the profit for such costly endeavor became clear.

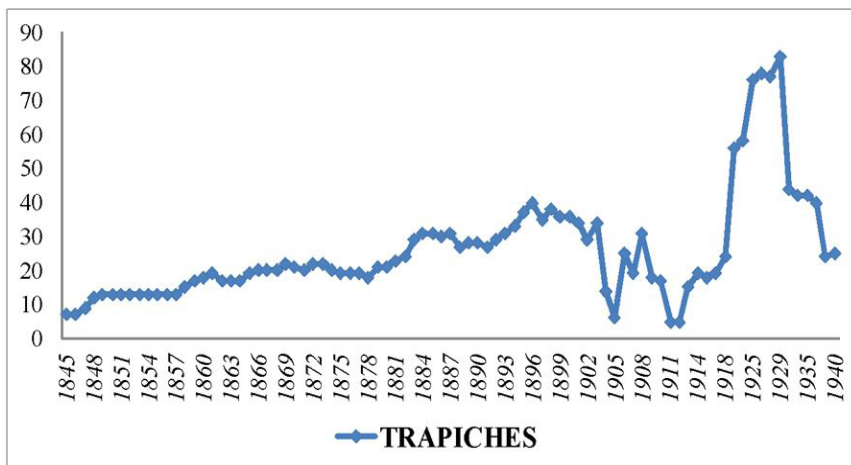
On the other hand, although the class fractions linked to exports and imports, to wharves, to storages, to small carriers or to large intercontinental transport operators urged the government for the renovation, they also wanted it to take full responsibility for its costs, which brings to life Celso Furtado’s saying that Brazilian capitalism is all about “privatized profits and public ownership of losses”!

In spite of that, in practice, we can perceive that wharf maintenance is still ongoing, despite the productive reforming that can be seen since the beginning of the 1910s. In 1929 Rio got to a total of 80 wharves, although the completion of the first phase had taken place in 1910.

⁶³In this regard see HONORATO, Cezar. Op. Cit

⁶⁴HONORATO, Cezar; RIBEIRO, Luiz Cláudio. A administração do Porto do Rio De Janeiro: dos anos 1850 à estatização de Vargas. In: POLONIA, Amélia; RIVERA MEDINA, Ana Maria. (Orgs.). La gobernanza de los puertos atlánticos. Madrid: Casa de Velásquez, 2016.

CHART 2
Wharves (1844-1940)



Source: ALMANAK ADMINISTRATIVO, MERCANTIL E INDUSTRIAL DA CORTE E PROVÍNCIA DO RIO DE JANEIRO (Almanaque Laemmert). Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia Laemmert, 1844-1940 (annual).

The Federal Government was authorized to take out a loan in London from bankers Rothschild and Sons (the Federal Government’s main creditor) for a total sum of 8,500,000 pound sterling for the construction of Rio’s port at extremely favorable interest conditions for the English bankers. Of said sum, 4,500,000 pound sterling was directed to C. H. Walker & C. (constructor of the port of Buenos Aires and the Manchester Ship Canal), which had all tax concessions.

We would like to point out that 136,239 pound sterling were spent in the purchase of *Rio de Janeiro Harbours and Docks’s* concession, and 1,059,202 pound sterling were spent in the *Empresa Industrial de Melhoramentos do Brasil’s* concession, for the former was not able to attract enough capital for the construction, and the latter, which had also incorporated D. Pedro II Docks, offered an operation and enhancement implementation that did not meet the actual demands of a modern port.

Evidently, as constructions stretched across seven years, the transfer of wharves to the area between the Canal do Mangue and Ponta do Cajú was authorized, since the port could not simply re-

main inoperative. In that context, the operation kept on at the new site as before, with ships stopping offshore, loading and unloading being carried out by small vessels and making use of the long wooden bridges that were connected to storage sites for commodities in an individual and decentralized manner, as was commonplace throughout the 19th century.

The major political conflict was, as previously mentioned, between the interests regarding the loading/unloading of commodities at the modern port's revolutionary docks and those in regard to offshore maritime dispatch, which supported the wharves and their operational logics in the 20th century.

The case of Rio de Janeiro is truly emblematic, as we can perceive when Reading the Appeal to the STF by *Compagnie Du Port de Rio de Janeiro*, dealer of the first completed phase of Rio's Port.

Furthermore, it is of notorious public cause that the coast ranging from the Avenida do Mangue all the way until the Caju, in Retiro Saudoso, is laden with wharves and bridges for loading and unloading activities. We could name, off the top of our heads, *Companhia Luz Stearica's*, *Companhia Marítima Neptuno's*, *Companhia Edificadora's*, *The Rio de Janeiro Light and Power's*, *Francisco Leal e Companhia's*, *Domingos Joaquim da Silva e Companhia's*, *Correa da Costa e Cia.'s*, *Machado Bastos e Cia.'s*, *Hasenclever e Cia.'s*, *Paulo Passos e Cia.'s*, *Theodor Wille e Cia.'s*, *Vieira Mattos e Cia.'s*, *Belmiro Rodrigues e Cia.'s* [...] all openly, with the governments' knowledge and no objection from the dock's *Cia. Arrendatária* [...] Now, this practice reveals that a significant share of imports and exports in Rio's Port is done off-docks, without any sort of tax payment to the *Cia.*⁶⁵

The referenced text perfectly showcases the difficulties in implementing a capitalist port model due to former types of wharves

65 DR. JOSÉ SABOIA VIRIATO DE MEDEIROS – O Supposto Monopólio dos Serviços do Porto do Rio de Janeiro e as Pretensões da *Compagnie Du Port de Rio de Janeiro* – Apelação junto ao Supremo Tribunal Federal. RJ, Typografia do Jornal do Commercio, 1913.

that still lingered, including those belonging to major international companies. Such scenario is not restricted to Rio de Janeiro, as it can be witnessed in other Brazilian ports with the exception of Santos, where we come across the permanence of a modern port coexisting with pre-capitalist structures.

It is not until the early 1930s that this problem is solved in Rio de Janeiro, when the operation is nationalized during Getúlio Vargas' tenure, and the works in the second phase, from the Canal do Manguê until Ponta do Caju, were completed, which rendered impossible the maintenance of the old wharves. From that moment on, an enormous modernization project of the ports began to move forward in Brazil⁶⁶.

Another allegation, gathered by Cruz, before the business documentation, making use of CNTRJ sources – the matter of size in the new port – is deemed false, as the port was constructed in the area where the former wharves stood, making up for the 1st phase ranging from the Arsenal da Marinha to the Canal do Manguê. Therefore, why would it have been deemed small only then?

The data submitted by Alfredo Lisboa⁶⁷ are clear: the port of Rio de Janeiro was built with 3,500 meter piers; 18 warehouses; 24 cranes and 2,200 meter railroads; 10 meters of average depth throughout the 250 meters of canal and 9 meters of average depth on the edge of the pier, reaching up to 12 meters with constant dredging works. This was most definitely not a small scale port! Even though it was unlikely to be enough in the upcoming commercial movement, it was in itself a Port Industrial Revolution when matched against previous standards.

66 HONORATO, Cezar; RIBEIRO, Luiz Cláudio. Op. Cit.

67 LISBOA, Alfredo. *Portos do Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: O Norte, 1922.

4. *Final Considerations*

Throughout this short paper, we have sought to present a few considerations in regard to port and city port historiographies, with emphasis to the case of Rio de Janeiro. Let it be known that this is a first attempt at systematizing the existing works surrounding the topic, while at the same time not venturing to exhaust discussions in its respect.

Its first part was dwelled on classic works that focus mainly on port movements regarding imports and exports, with emphasis on the colonial period, which is still considered reference in serial terms.

Subsequently, we aimed at pointing out works that reflected upon some Brazilian ports in the period ranging from the second half of the 19th century until the early 20th century. In that case, we sought to present those who innovated theoretically and methodologically, with new sources or themes, regarding ports and port cities.

Finally, in its last part – which warranted greater focus – we elaborated on the case of Rio de Janeiro. This section not only introduced works that we deem seminal, but also reflected upon new productions in the attempt to broaden the theoretical debate, considering our premises and the results of our research group's works.

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