

# From the “Paulista peasant” to the “Independence men”: interpretations under dispute over the national past in the Hall of Honor of Museu Paulista<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT:** In this article we analyze the narrative transformation that took place in the Hall of Honor of the Museu Paulista, between 1895, year of its inauguration, and the celebration of the centenary of the Independence of Brazil, in 1922. We observed intellectual and political articulations of historical narrative nature based on the commission of paintings specially dedicated to that celebratory space of the founding of the nation, aiming to understand what reasons must have guided the rise process of a landmark of the Empire during the First Republic. Therefore, we address projects that have had discontinuity and deviations both from the political elite and intellectuals and painters.

**KEYWORDS:** Brazilian Art. Independence of Brazil. Museu Paulista.

**RESUMO:** O presente artigo analisa a transformação narrativa operada no Salão de Honra do Museu Paulista, entre 1895, ano de sua inauguração, até a comemoração do centenário da Independência do Brasil em 1922. São observadas as articulações intelectuais e políticas de

1. This article was written based on some of the authors' reflections present in their master's theses. See Lima Junior (2015); Nery (2015).

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composição narrativa histórica a partir de encomendas de pinturas especialmente dedicadas àquele espaço celebrativo da fundação da nação, visando compreender que motivos teriam orientado o processo de ascensão de um marco do Império durante a Primeira República. Dessa forma, são abordados projetos que tiveram descontinuidade e inflexões tanto da elite política quanto de intelectuais e pintores.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Arte brasileira. Independência do Brasil. Museu Paulista.

"The<sup>4</sup> monument represents the most stunning architecture work that currently exists in Brazil, although still incomplete."<sup>5</sup>

The imposing presence of a palace built at the top of the hill and in the vicinity of a torrential stream certainly impacted the gaze of the observer who was passing through the badlands of Ipiranga in São Paulo, in the late XIX century. Built with bold techniques at the time,<sup>6</sup> between 1885 and 1890, the *Palácio de Bezzi* [Bezzi Palace] – in reference to the Italian engineer and architect Tommaso Gaudenzio Bezzi, commissioned for its construction – sought to delimit in time and space the place of "the cry of Ipiranga."<sup>7</sup> This is because this monument, erected as a building (a singular case in the country), aimed at celebrating the Independence of Brazil, which occurred in the vicinity on September 7, 1822. From its construction onward, the birth of the nation was celebrated, a nation that was born thanks to the act of the first emperor – having São Paulo as the background of the historical event –, precisely at the time when the monarchical government started cracking and threatened to collapse. With the Proclamation of the Republic in 1889, the building, which did not have a practical use yet, besides consisting in a symbol, would make room to a museum only in 1893, and which was inaugurated only in 1895.

Inserted in the debate on the political structure of the First Republic, the Ipiranga Monument brought to light the centrality of the São Paulo's point of view on the Brazilian history,<sup>8</sup> while celebrating, in an untimely manner for the recent Republic, the First Reign. The creation of a museum of scientific purpose, focused on the collections of zoology and ethnography, did not leave aside the memorial genesis, the first function of the palace and of Pedro Américo's canvas *Independência ou morte!* [Independence or death!] (1888), especially executed to be exhibited in the Hall of Honor of the building, and to celebrate the act of D. Pedro I. Over the years, in which new political and historical contexts unfold, the monument was directed to redefine historical paradigms related to the memory of the country's Independence. This process provided new interpretative layers about the patrimony, the city, the state, and the very nation.

To the Hall of Honor of the museum, a room known for accommodating the gigantic canvas of Pedro Américo *Independência ou Morte!* [Independence or Death!], other paintings were added in an articulated way between the secretary of the interior Cesário Motta Jr.<sup>9</sup> and the painter, who was born in the city of Itu, José Ferraz de Almeida Jr.<sup>10</sup> Both had an active role and nurtured the recognition of other intellectuals of the time, besides, as we shall see, having an impact on each other in the conception of the Noble Hall in the monument.<sup>11</sup> A narrative created through paintings that rearticulated the center of the nation's history toward São

4. All citations were free translated by the translator of the article.

5. REPORT (1894, p. 11).

6. On the construction of the Building-Monument, see Petrela (2008); Oliveira Filho (2002-2003).

7. See Oliveira (1997).

8. Oliveira (1995 p. 195-208). According to the author, since the construction project of the Independence Monument at Ipiranga, which dates back to the first half of the XIX century, this place was already understood as a place for the nation's formation and aimed at centering the historical narrative of Brazil at the city of São Paulo.

9. Cesário Nazianzeno de Azevedo Motta Magalhães Junior (Porto Feliz, SP, Brazil, 1847 – Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil, 1897), a central figure in the formation of the art gallery of the Museu Paulista, was born in Porto Feliz and graduated in medicine in Rio de Janeiro. He was a Republican since the Empire, having participated in the founding of the São Paulo Republican Party in Itu, countryside of the state, in 1873. He was elected deputy for the first time in 1878, when he proposed the creation of a university in São Paulo and an institute of Natural Sciences. In 1889, he was elected to join the National Constituent Assembly. In the Government of Bernardino de Campos, he was secretary of the interior between 1892 and 1894, year in which he takes the position of President-founder of the History and Geography Institute of São Paulo, where he works until his death in 1897.

10. José Ferraz de Almeida Júnior (Itu, SP, Brazil, 1850

– Piracicaba, SP, Brazil, 1899) studied at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in Rio de Janeiro between 1869 and 1874. He was granted with a scholarship from the Emperor D. Pedro II to study in Paris, where he stayed between 1876 and 1882. Recognized as the most influential Paulista painter in the period, he decided to keep his atelier in São Paulo, which was deemed contradictory at the time, since the fine arts halls and the academy were established in Rio de Janeiro. His work is recognized by genre paintings, portraits and, mainly, paintings of the countryside way of life.

11. In the proposed period, the director of the museum, Hermann von Ihering, a German zoologist, obtained such a position (thanks to Cesário Motta Jr.) without, however, assuming a central role in the constitution of the art collection of the Museu Paulista. In fact, until 1905, when 20 paintings were transferred to found the Pinacoteca de São Paulo (Museum of Visual Arts of the State of São Paulo), we may observe only correspondence on commissions of a series of portraits painted by Benedito Calixto. On the other acquisitions, there are cases in which the director only knew about the purchase through the newspaper. See Nery (2015).

12. Ihering ([1895], p. 6). Rare Works of the Museu Paulista library. Pedro Américo's canvas was delivered in November 1894, and before it was in Chicago, USA, for the Universal Exposition.

13. "Reais" refer to the Brazilian currency, BRL.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 4-5.

Paulo, especially focused on the development of a people, namely, the *caipira* [Brazilian hillbilly] of the countryside of the state. For the celebrations of the Independence Centenary, in 1922, new paintings were added to the Hall of Honor, commissioned by the director and historian Afonso Taunay to the artists Oscar Pereira da Silva and Domenico Failutti. The historical subjects and characters selected to be portrayed, as we shall see, would no longer be the "Paulista (people who were born in São Paulo) peasants," but rather, and mostly, those linked to the state. The Hall of Honor, in this new configuration of the museum, would consist in the outcome of a historical and evolutionary narrative that begins in the lobby, where achievements and characters of the past of São Paulo, from immemorial times of the Colony to the Independence, are depicted as determinants for the Brazilian history.

#### THE CAIPIRAS EMERGE IN HISTORY: ALMEIDA JÚNIOR, CESÁRIO MOTTA JR., AND A CERTAIN PAULISTA "KIND"

If the initial idea, in 1894, was to reserve the great Hall of Honor for "solemn occasions,"<sup>12</sup> in the 1895 Report written by Ihering to Alfredo Pujol, on the organization of the museum, there is another instigating information about the use of that noble space of the institution:

**The Hall of Honor comprised the Fine Arts Gallery**, partly belonging to the State Government, partly to the Monument. This last remark refers to the painting *Brado do Ypiranga* [The Cry of Ipiranga] [...] **This art gallery mostly consists in three paintings that the Government purchased this year**, being two Brazilian hillbillies paintings by Almeida Junior, purchased for 5 thousand *reais*<sup>13</sup> each, and that of the still life painted by Pedro Alexandrino, for 2 thousand *reais*. Moreover, there is a landscape by Antonio Parreiras, *Manhã de Inverno* [Winter Morning], a gift to the Government, and *A leitura* [Reading], by Almeida Junior, with the following inscription: "In honor of the founder of the Art Museum of the State of São Paulo The Most Excellent Dr. Cesario Motta, Almeida Junior presents this canvas to the Ypiranga Gallery."<sup>14</sup>

The formation of a "Fine Arts Gallery" in the museum, expressed in the aforementioned excerpt, referred to the aspirations of Cesário Motta Jr., secretary of the interior from 1892 to 1895, during the management of the President of the state Bernardino de Campos. The role of the works of art, according to Motta Júnior, would be to educate the audience. The arts, alongside science, were inseparable

elements in the state educational program.<sup>15</sup> Thus, in his report sent to Bernardino de Campos, Motta Jr. highlighted in his project that

Likewise, properly interpreting the Law [N. 192 of August 26 for the creation of the Museu Paulista], which must reserve rooms for the busts of our remarkable men and for the most important paintings of our painters, we intend to form a **gallery** over there, where we concentrate the best works of our artists.<sup>16</sup>

Not only large figures of the homeland history and exemplary events of the national past, but also works of several genres would be part of the collection. The initial set of these works purchased by the secretary, as Fernanda Pitta observes,<sup>17</sup> demonstrates an effort to put into practice a project of great significance: “the history of São Paulo should be investigated and told also considering the focus on the habits and traditions of a very characteristic kind – the Brazilian hillbilly.”

Museu Paulista originated in 1892, when Cesário Motta assumed the Department of Interior (1892-1894), in the Government of Bernardino de Campos (1892-1896). Its structure, dedicated to natural sciences, has joined scientific interests, following the model of the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro, with public benefit, which was based on the educational purpose of the exhibitions, open to the population.<sup>18</sup> The museum was considered a state-of-the-art institution, since it fulfilled part of the demand for the construction of scientific knowledge in a provincial capital where there was only the Law School of Largo São Francisco. Cesário Motta Jr. would also be responsible for a reformulation in primary education, by the creation of the Polytechnic Faculty, in 1894, and by the preliminary project of the Faculty of Medicine, which would only be founded in 1912. Indirectly, the foundation of a museum of natural sciences, in such a symbolic space for the monarchy, reinforces a civic sense that can be understood with a certain critical bias concerning the government that preceded it. The museum as a research institution in São Paulo symbolized a rupture with the centralized structure of the production of scientific knowledge of the monarchic period.

Therefore, the work and the thought of Cesário Motta Jr. are noteworthy, in his position of political and intellectual, for also having been the founding president of the History and Geography Institute of São Paulo (1894-1897). Thus, he is a paramount figure to understand the meaning expressed by the motto of this institute: “The history of São Paulo is the history of Brazil.” The *caipirismo* or rural aspect<sup>19</sup> present in his texts may have originated a federalist and regionalist Republican narrative in the Ipiranga Monument, with the partnership of José Ferraz de Almeida Jr. The known documents and texts by Cesário Motta Jr. are the series of reports of

15. On the positivist conception and analysis of the proposals, see Nery (2015).

16. See Motta Jr. (1894).

17. See Pitta (2013).

18. See Lopes (2009); Alves (2001).

19. Further investigation is lacking in order to understand the dimension of the *caipira* in the political and ideological horizon of the XIX century. Here we outline an analysis centered on the mentioned texts and images. Although authors of important studies have investigated the culture and society of the countryside of the State, as well as the change in relationships established with the advancement of coffee production during the XIX century, nothing approaches the representative development in the political or everyday life of those living in the city and members of the State and the *caipira* figure as in the situation we shall analyze next. On the condition of the *caipira* society in the XIX century, see Franco (1997), and for the reminiscences of the *caipira* culture, see Candido (2017).

20. See Motta Jr. (1893; 1894; 1895).

21. See São Paulo, Law no. 192 of August 26, 1893; São Paulo, Law no. 200 of August 29, 1893; São Paulo, Decree no. 249 of July 26, 1894.

22. You can find the full text of the play in Almeida (2011).

23. See Motta Jr. (1983 [1883]).

24. Text published in TAUNAY, Afonso de E. (1946, p. 67-72). His thesis defended in the Faculty of Medicine is still known, but it is not directly related to the object of analysis.

25. See Miyoshi (2012).

26. See Singh Jr. (2004).

27. See Pitta (2013; 2016).

28. See Nery (2015; 2016).

29. Pitta (2013, p. 284-286).

30. Some of these works of the *caipira* repertoire are well known, all belonging to the collection of the Pinacoteca de São Paulo, such as *Apertando o lombilho* (1895), *Nbã Chica* (1895), *Cozinha caipira* (1895), *O violeiro* (1899), and *Saudade* (1899). For the illustration of these paintings, see Lourenço; Nascimento (2007).

31. Acquired by José Mauricio Sampaio Vianna, the owner was also one of the organizers of the exhibition in memory of the painter one year after his death.

32. Nowadays the four paintings belong to the collection of Pinacoteca de São Paulo. On the larger

the period in which he was secretary of the interior,<sup>20</sup> the decrees for the creation and regulation of the Museu Paulista,<sup>21</sup> the theatrical play *A Caipirinha* [The little hillbilly girl], written in 1880,<sup>22</sup> the historical text *Porto-Feliz e as monções de Cuiabá* [Porto-Feliz and the Cuiabá expedition],<sup>23</sup> published in 1884, and the report *Reportagem sobre a Convenção de Itu* [Reporting on the Itu Convention], in 1890.<sup>24</sup> The relationship between the secretary's texts and the production of Almeida Jr. were surveyed by previous research: Alex Miyoshi<sup>25</sup> pointed out a possible project and the proximity between both of them by highlighting their civilizational and educational role. Oseas Singh Jr.<sup>26</sup> established the relationship of the text on the expeditions as a reference for the creation of the painting *Partida da Monção* [Expedition Departure] (1897), whereas Fernanda Pitta deepens the analysis,<sup>27</sup> comparing the text and the painting and observing the adaptations made by the painter. This author analyzed the positivist foundation of Cesário Motta Jr. In his reports,<sup>28</sup> which lead to the understanding of the dynamics of acquisitions of canvases for the creation of the Artistic Gallery of the Ipiranga Monument, as we shall discuss.

Almeida Jr., until 1893, when the creation of the museum was proclaimed, had painted the canvas *Caipiras Negaceando* [Brazilian hillbillies skillfully moving] (1888), which the State of São Paulo tried to purchase, though without succeeding, since the painting was purchased by the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>29</sup> This canvas inaugurated a series of paintings that brought the Paulista peasant to light. At the end of the XIX century, Almeida Jr. painted a series of works that present the figure of the Brazilian hillbilly (*caipira*) in activities other than work, which intended to document the life of the "typical" Paulista peasant.<sup>30</sup> The painter was then recognized as a prominent figure among the Republican elite of São Paulo, so much so that in the same year the destination of the monument in the museum was decreed, and the artist has visited the building in Ipiranga with the Secretary Cesário Motta Jr. In December 1893, such was reported as the "Gallery of Fine Arts" by the newspaper *Correio Paulistano*, which informed that both of them had gone to the Ipiranga Monument to search for "a suitable place for the creation of a gallery of paintings, sculptures, and statues, with the required technical conditions [...]". The meeting with the painter may have led to a possible commission, since still in 1893 Almeida Jr. had executed two small paintings, *Caipira picando fumo* [Brazilian hillbilly making cigars] and *Amolação Interrompida* [Interrupted task], which were acquired by a specific person.<sup>31</sup> The following year, the painter executed two larger versions, which were promptly purchased by the Secretary of the Interior Cesário Motta Jr. and destined for the Museu Paulista.<sup>32</sup> This acquisition could be absolutely casual if the meeting had not occurred in December of the previous year. In addition, the two paintings have identical dimensions to each other

and properly fit into the side niches of the Noble Hall of the Building-Monument.<sup>33</sup> Hence, they would consist in a set by being hanged alongside *Independência ou Morte!* [Independence or death!] (Figure 1).<sup>34</sup> Probably, both paintings depicting Brazilian hillbillies have not been made by chance, considering the size of the walls of the Noble Hall. The enlargement of the two paintings seems to be a clear indication of a work that was intended for the museum. The following year, the artist initiated the studies for *Partida da Monção* [Expedition Departure] (Figure 2), whose first study dates to 1895. There are studies that prove the proximity between the text by Cesário Motta Jr. and the big historical canvas of Almeida Jr., as already surveyed. However, as in the case of the paintings on Brazilian hillbillies, we cannot state whether there was a request for the painter to proceed with the painting concerning the expedition issue, whose large dimensions, six-meter wide, make explicit that, if it was not a direct commission of the State, it could not have another destination other than the museum. *Partida da monção* [Expedition Departure] would be done in 1897, the year of the death of Cesário Motta Jr., and acquired to the Museu Paulista only in 1899, after the death of the painter.



Figure 1 – Pedro Américo de Figueiredo e Melo. *Independência ou Morte!* [Independence or Death!], 1888, oil painting, 415 x 760 cm. Collection of Museu Paulista. Reproduction: Helio Nobre; José Rosael.

We may infer that there was, in this important exchange between the Secretary of Interior /president of the History and Geography Institute of São Paulo and the painter from Itu, a proposal to compose a narrative that would follow the political facts logically linked to the Independence at the Ipiranga Monument, specially related to the work of Pedro Américo and the visuality expressed on the canvas. The insertion of the Brazilian hillbilly element is worth of a more careful

versions and their transfer to Pinacoteca, see Nery (2015).

33. The canvases have identical measures, 200 x 140 cm, very close to those that today occupy the niches of the side walls of the Hall of Honor, the portrait of *Dona Leopoldina de Habsburgo e seus filhos* [Mrs. Leopoldina of Habsburg and her children] and of *Maria Quitéria de Jesus Medeiros*, by Domenico Failutti, measuring 233 x 133 cm without frame and 255 x 155 cm with frame. The latter, as we shall see, were painted in the 1920s, during the management of Taunay, who redecorated the whole room.

34. The works were hanged in the Hall of Honor as reported in the very magazine of the Museu Paulista, *Revista do Museu Paulista*, which reported the opening of the rooms. As for their position, however, there is a fairly plausible assumption for the aforementioned reasons. See Ihering (1895).



Figure 2 – Jose Ferraz de Almeida Junior. *Partida da Monção* [Expedition Departure], 1897, oil painting, 390 x 640 cm. Collection of Museu Paulista. Reproduction: Helio Nobre; José Rosael.

reflection. A political perspective of the *caipira* figure, or the *caipirismo* (rural aspect) as an ideological vector of representation of the Paulista society at the end of the XIX century, is still an uncompleted task. The historical process of this rural aspect in the city and political environment still lacks thorough study. However, Cesário Motta Jr.'s play, *A caipirinha*, is revealing to the question, in addition to the study on the matter carried out by Vinicius Soares de Almeida.<sup>35</sup> The play addresses the abduction of an orphan hillbilly girl – her father have died in the Paraguayan War and her mother have had a heart attack. Through a court order arranged by a former neighbor, the young girl is taken from her grandfather's custody to live with a tutor in the city, but instead of being educated, she is made into the maid of the house. The girl is saved by her cousin and lover, and thus returns to meet her grandfather and the countryside. The moral obstacle of the whole plot occurs in the contrast between the virtue of the man of the countryside and the addictions of those living in the city. Almeida also mentioned newspapers of the time that deal with the existence of similar facts, stating that this would be a procedure used to take Brazilian hillbillies away. The narrative criticizes the monarchical period in which it was written, when the civil-institutional arrangement is corrupted, which, for Cesário Motta Jr., was absolutely immoral and opposed to the population, especially the Paulista peasant. On the other hand, the hillbilly protagonist is representative of morality, fraternity, and respect for the family. The "uncivilized" hillbillies are, therefore, portrayed as noble and pure, at the expense of those governed by the



structure of the Monarchy, controlled by citizens who use the laws for their own benefit. In addition, the text emphasizes, in several passages, not only the pride of the *caipiras'* way of life, such as their food, drinks, etc., but especially their independence in relation to the materiality and society of the Empire.<sup>36</sup> As Almeida well contextualizes, despite a comic play, it was opposed to the plots of the same theme staged in the court until then, in which, overall, the hillbilly character wished to leave the countryside and stay in the city. Furthermore, the play depicts, almost in a documentary way, aspects of the *caipira* way of life, such as the procession, the music etc., in order to compose elements considered peculiar and founding of this culture.

The Brazilian hillbilly, for Cesário Motta Jr., was a pure subject, who should be deemed as an ethical symbol. At the same time, they represent a historical and ethnic foundation, since they result from the endeavor towards the countryside of Brazil in search of gold and for expanding the trade, whose moment of dispersion and greater transit of people occurred during the expeditions of the XVIII century. The ethnic condition of the hillbillies was considered the mixture between indigenous people and white people, which could be positively or negatively understood. Here it is especially positive, being understood as an amalgam of "races" that have balance and fluency regarding the territory, demonstrated by the survival in the hinterlands of the country in an isolated way and by their singular culture.<sup>37</sup> However, seen as indolent and lazy people by European travelers and even by their urban contemporaries,<sup>38</sup> the very Brazilian hillbilly illustrated in Cesário Motta Jr.'s play did not fit the work mode aimed by coffee and sugarcane farmers, neither housework.<sup>39</sup> The sense of autonomy that repelled the wage labor was often considered in a pejorative manner.<sup>40</sup>

It is also worth noting how Cesário Motta Jr. has justified the formation of the collection of paintings that addressed hillbillies' portraits. For the secretary, the canvases were able to agglutinate the society and propose collective meanings. Their moral content works for the construction of the homeland and civilization:

[...] the Fine Arts serve for the perpetuation of historical documents, along with the education of the senses; for the best direction of our will; for the reproduction of heroic acts; they serve for the occupation of the true geniuses and talents such as those we are happy to share our lives with; as a trace of union among all those who are able to love the beauty, to civilize a state, to form a collectivity capable of constituting a civilized nation, disregarding small questions that frequently arise in the fight for existence, in the clashes of politic and social interests.<sup>41</sup>

36. In a short excerpt we can notice the pride that comes from subsistence, and the understanding of the sense of autonomy of this peasant life: "[Hillbilly hero of the play] Juca [towards the bailiff]: (...) We're poor, sure, but we work with our arm so we don't need to ask them for a bit of wealth. They, there in the villa with their dish made of gold and we with our leaf plates... Is true... but our beans is more tasty because it cost our sweat and not the work of our fellows. The meat in our pot is more tasty for us that hunted the cavy, the deer, the partridge, without ask them for a borrowed nickle, for a single nickle to our neighbor." Almeida (2011, p. 135).

37. See Nery (2015). This author sought to analyze other sources that indicate this ethnic understanding, such as José Vieira Couto de Magalhães, a figure of monarchical ideals, but whose opinions were respected by the Republicans. His defense of an American pride mirrored in the United States of America is in line with the period of formation of the Brazilian Republic and, mainly, with the federalist notion of Paulista Republicans and especially based on the programmatic contribution of Cesário Motta Jr.

38. Years later, in 1918, Monteiro Lobato wrote *Urupês*, a racist criticism of the Brazilian hillbillies, for whom indolence and laziness are the main mottos. There is also a harsh criticism of the rural aspect of the city men, which warns us of the ambiguity that hillbillies and their ideology carried until then.

39. For the disintegration of the *caipira* way of life amid

the advancement of the agrarian property of coffee, see Franco (1997).

40. According to Antonio Candido, in São Paulo the adventurous type consisted in an ideal human kind, which is an inheritance of the way of life expressed by the *caipira*: “[...] after stabilization [with the end of the Bandeiras movement and expeditions], in the mid-XVIII century, Brazilian hillbillies were left with not only a certain mentality of camping – provisional and brief – but also a sense of equality, which even in the most humble and disadvantaged people, involves in refuting the constant submission and obedience.” Candido (2017, p. 99).

41. Motta Jr. (1893, p. 43).

42. Motta Jr. (1895, p. 76).

That is, representations that are guides of a nation above political disputes of the moment, which serve to create a sense of political identity, but which are sustained on a higher level than that of “partisans” or commoners. This demonstrates that Cesário Motta Jr. does not seek confrontation, but an agreement and an appreciation of symbols that were ultimately conservative and had the purpose of founding a moral sense of homeland. In his justification for the purchase of the canvases on Brazilian hillbillies, we can perceive how this discourse is emulated in the sense of the acquisition of genre paintings on the *caipiras* by Almeida Jr. and not just paintings on *heroic acts*.

I benefit from the authorization to create the Fine Arts Gallery, I acquired two paintings from the collection of the painter Almeida Junior and one painted by the modest artist Pedro Alexandrino. The first two depict the *caipira*, that is, our peasant, the landsman, a kind that shall disappear, to the extent civilization is spreading through our cities and countryside. To portray this figure on a canvas was paramount, for time will come when inquisitive searchers, aiming to reproduce our past, and make it integral, so to speak, shall find this legendary kind, preserved by the powerful and talented observation from a compatriot who honors us.<sup>42</sup>

The sense of preservation of the Brazilian hillbilly on the canvases and, henceforth, their documentation, is objectively linked to the transformation that should occur in the incoming future. For Cesário Motta Jr., the march of progress would soon extinguish the hillbilly subject and culture, as it had been actually occurring in places where the coffee farm was in contact with this population, incorporating them into its logic or banishing them more and more into the backlands. As we previously noted, the Brazilian hillbilly represented a people, selected as that legendary kind – an original population that should provide a common sense and unite the population. But the reason for the hillbilly existence lies in the set of some factors already mentioned, which motivate the *caipirismo* ideology. We consider three main elements: the historical, since it is the constituent population of São Paulo and occupant of the countryside, bearer of a Paulista ancestry inherited from the adventurer; the ethnic-cultural, which emerges by the mixture of races that has overlapped in the dispute with indigenous people, proving to be the most adapted to the country; and, finally, the total autonomy in relation to external factors, reinforcing the adaptive and also symbolic character of the population of São Paulo concerning the institutions of the court. This last aspect, of valorization of autonomy, is the most abstract. Nevertheless, in his report on the Itu Convention, Cesário Motta Jr. highlights a controversial point in a brief passage in which he states: “This was the most remarkable fact: Martim Francisco, son, has welcomed the initiative of the people from Itu, who proved, in the achievement of this event [the inauguration of

the railroad], to no longer need to be guarded by the government.”<sup>43</sup> Without demonstrating whether there is an agreement, it is worth noting the noble spirit of Paulistas and their relationship with the regionalism proposed by Cesário Motta Jr., which are gathered within the scope of federalist, and therefore American, politics of the newly proclaimed Republic.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that Cesário Motta Jr. was the pioneer of the reform of education, which would directly affect the countryside population. His idealism is not, therefore, the preservation of the hillbilly way of life, but the perpetuation of an identity, or rather, the creation of an *ethos*. Here there is an approach to the naturalism of the genre paintings by Almeida Jr.,<sup>44</sup> but it is difficult to state who would impact the other, because the sequence of justifications of Cesário Motta Jr. changes after the encounter with the painter. Both the texts that address the creation of the museum in 1893, signed by the secretary, and the sequence of reports referring to the activities from 1893 to 1894 seem to turn over a new leaf. In those referring to the year 1893, the terms used to create an art collection are linked to history and “heroic acts.” On the other hand, in the 1894 regulation of Museu Paulista and in the 1894 report, the terms “local customs” and “habits” appear.<sup>45</sup> Thus, there may have been, throughout this period, an alignment between the painter and the secretary, the intertwined relationship between art and power.

The purchase under the justification of documenting the “legendary” figure that would be left aside with progress opposes the imaginary we find in Pedro Américo’s painting of the cry of Ipiranga. Américo’s canvas is the Brazilian history painting that emulates the condition of a nation by addressing the foundation of Brazil in an iconic way. Unlike those produced by the painter himself and which narrate war acts, the image of Independence is the one able to create an imaginary for the nation throughout the end of the monarchical period and the beginning of the Republic. He was able to create a narrative that, along with the monument and celebrations, linked its image to the foundation of the country under the orders of Dom Pedro I. At the same time, the use of a Napoleonic war painting structure reduces the tension of a conflict – on the canvas, the conflict is in the past –, officers appear on the top of the hill and the guards are moving without a rebellion atmosphere, but celebrating the “end of the battle.”<sup>46</sup> However, the edges of the painting also deserve our attention, the presence of a hillbilly and, on the other side, the adobe house that place Américo’s painting in São Paulo, which, according to the painter himself:

Conspicuous people suggested me the idea of painting, at the bottom of the canvas, some of the troops with soldiers riding donkeys, characteristic of São Paulo’s backlands. I deemed bold to do so in a painting of such an important matter; and I only portrayed an ox-wagon,

43. Taunay (1946, p. 67-72).

44. See Pitta (2013). The author deeply researched the impact of French and Portuguese naturalism that may have penetrated a discourse developed in Brazil among writers, intellectuals, and painters, as in the case of Almeida Jr. On page 372, she states: “Besides the fixation for characteristic types executed by Almeida, there were, based on examples of the French naturalism, on a certain Italian *verismo*, and on Portuguese naturalism, other ways to understand alternatives provided by the painting of customs for the foundation of a national art. This painting trend can be considered as the genre that allows gathering the representation of characteristic human types and specific landscapes as well. By uniting figures and landscapes, elements are configured for a visual interpretation of situations or narratives that acquire a particularism of the place and time in which they happen. In this sense, they can provide the pictorial key for representing scenes and events that incorporate and explain the meaning of nationality in a descriptive, narrative, and symbolic key. Hence, constituting images capable, at the same time, of fixing characteristic elements of nationality (kinds and landscapes) and visually configuring the narrative strand of its formation and meaning.”

45. See Motta Jr. (1893). There, he says: “If there is one thing that make me proud about this land, if there is a time when I feel my thoughts are elevated, it is in the academy, when I contemplate canvases perfectly portraying heroic facts of our life, paintings of our splendid nature perfectly reproduced.” On the other hand, Motta Jr.,

1894, *op. cit.*, states: "Gathering paintings that perpetuate accomplishments of our ancestors, their habits and customs; that portray our nature, the beauty of the place we inhabited, its richness in all kingdoms is not only a document for the history of our civilization, but rather a means of providing aesthetic education to the population."

46. For the relationship between the painting and those portraying Napoleonic battles, especially executed by Enest Meissonier, see Oliveira; Mattos (1999).

47. *Ibid.*

48. Oliveira (1999, p. 73).

49. Bueno (2008, p. 47).

50. On the figuration of the black man on other Américo's paintings, see Schwarcz; Stumpf; Lima Junior (2013); Stumpf (2019).

even more characteristic of the place, in such a way to remember the usual placidity of those locations, an unexpected play of the extraordinary scene.

Although partly obliged to large dimensions for occupying the foreground of the painting, the figures situated on the left of the spectator are mere accessories, which I sought to study in the very scene of the Independence proclamation, both to accentuate its physiognomy, and to complete the linear harmony of the composition, meeting the requirements of eurythmics.<sup>47</sup>

If Pedro Américo paints, in the left corner of the canvas, the naked-torso hillbilly driving the ox-wagon, with a straw hat on his head, and plainly dressed – including walking barefoot –, his presence on the historical scene may have not been randomly chosen by the artist. As Cecília Helena de Salles Oliveira observes, the painter had to adapt his composition to the expectations of the Construction Committee of the Ipiranga Monument, headed by Barão de Ramalho, the same who entrusted Américo the commission of the painting in 1885.<sup>48</sup> One of the sketches of the painting, preserved in the Fadel collection of Rio de Janeiro<sup>49</sup> (Figure 3), may provide instigating indications to think of the figuration of the Brazilian hillbilly in front of his ox-wagon. In the study, Américo opts for the figure of an enslaved black man with a hoe in his hand, close to the officers who applaud the horse-ridden prince, and who occupies that same space reserved for the hillbilly in the final version. Possibly, the inclusion of the black man could suggest, on the one hand, Brazil's aspiration of freedom as a common desire, shared with others surrounding the figure of the prince, and on the other, we must think of the ongoing debates about the end of slavery, at the time the painting was executed, and which Américo did not fail to reference in this work.<sup>50</sup> We may guess if it was not the black man's figure in the composition that displeased the members of the Ipiranga Monument Committee, since it imposed, before the observers' eyes, the presence of slave labor in São Paulo, contrary to discourses of the formation of the Paulista "people," which sought to obscure the black element and to emphasize the mixture between whites and indigenous peoples, resulting in the Brazilian hillbilly. Indeed, we observe the presence of the black man on the canvas (Figure 4), but in a much more discreet way than what is proposed in the Fadel collection's sketch: he became a tiny figure, arranged in the upper left corner, and leading his animal to the opposite path of that in which the main scene takes place.

The centrality of the prince with all figures converging towards his direction, the ravishing gestures of the officers, such as the one in the very foreground of the canvas, swinging his red and blue cockades in the air (colors of the Portuguese ensign), being followed by the other members of the troop and who wrenched their swords in a clear adherence to D. Pedro's attitude, also welcomed by the members of his entourage, demonstrate Pedro Américo's attention to the rules of



Figure 3 – Pedro Américo de Figueiredo e Melo. *Independência ou Morte!* [Independence or Death!] (study), [n.d.], oil painting, 59 x 51 cm. Fadel Collection – RJ.



Figure 4 – Barefoot and driving his donkey, the black man, with generic features, follows the path opposite to that in which the main scene takes place.

51. Claudia Valladão de Mattos (1999) dedicated herself to develop this question. See, still, Rosenberg (1998); Mattos (1999); Christo (2005); Pitta (2013).

52. *The Cry of Ypiranga or the Proclamation of the Independence of Brazil* (1888).

53. Cecília Helena de Salles Oliveira thoroughly problematizes this question in her research, see among other studies of the same author (2005).

54. Coli (2010, p. 74).

the “science of beauty,” to the *decorum* of the history painting.<sup>51</sup> This canvas, which has been thoroughly analyzed in studies on Brazilian art, poses new problems when we pay attention to its details.

If the artist arranges all action directed towards the scene of the “hero” (D. Pedro), grouping his entourage and troop in the same spatiality of the composition, for the “corners,” he places three figures that little resemble “mere accessories,” as Américo himself argued in the booklet that accompanied the painting.<sup>52</sup> In this part of the canvas, in a diagonal plane from the top left to the center of the composition, occupying about a quarter of the scene, we see, prominently, the hillbilly who directs his gaze to the main scene, wearing a straw hat on his head, with the bare torso, barefoot, and who drives the heavy ox-wagon. The colors of his garments (Figure 5) – the very crumpled white shirt, with an overlapped red fabric, and the blue trousers folded above the knee – can be an immediate reference to the blue, white, and red that composed the tricolored flag of France since the Revolution, and which represent the motto “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.” The choice for these colors does not seem mere coincidence for a painting whose subject is Independence, the conquest of the so-desired “freedom” of the colony in relation to the ancient metropolis.<sup>53</sup> The insistence in emphasizing the three colors can be verified, for example, in the disposition of the elements that compose the uniforms of the troop; in the third officer from left to right, the fold in his blue coat enables visualizing its red lining, which added to the white color of the vest form, once again, the triple “red, white, and blue.” The reference to the French Revolution appears in the aforementioned blue and red ribbons (cockades) attached to the arms of the soldiers that tear it as a sign of rupture with Portugal. Jorge Coli enlightens us about such datum when stating

The symbolic role of the cockades is part of the revolutionary arts: let us resume the gesture of the young Bara, painted by David, who dies by the Republic; naked, he tightens the emblem against his heart. This history experienced with the new symbols, an iconology written by collective experiences of the great History, shall have a famous repercussion in Brazil. When Prince D. Pedro screams “ribbons off, soldiers,” he surely inserts himself into the ramifications traced by the genealogy of the revolutionary cockade. The great historical episode, that took place on the hill of Ipiranga, in 1822, will revive, at the nightfall of the XIX century, on the admirable Pedro Américo’s canvas, intended for the museum that celebrates the Independence of Brazil in the very place where such occurred. The great agitation that electrify the troops surrounding the prince, such as Pedro Américo conceived the scene, begins with the gesture of the first rider ripping off the ribbons of his uniform.<sup>54</sup>

The symbolic meaning attributed to the “red, white, and blue” can be a metaphor for the very moment of painting the canvas. The end of slavery was the



Figure 5 – The white, red, and blue in the hillbilly's clothes.

subject that ignited political debates of the Empire, and the year of 1888<sup>55</sup> – when the painting was completed – urged the discussion once and for all, followed by the intensification of the Republican propaganda,<sup>56</sup> intentionally mistaking the French revolutionary symbology, with the use of colors and gestures, for the scene of Independence and the colors of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil, and Algarve. Just about a month before the Slavery Abolition, the painting was exhibited in Florence with “significant solemnity and in the Noble Presence of Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor and the Empress, as well as other Sovereigns and Princes”<sup>57</sup>, as Américo himself has stated in a letter sent from Italy on April 20, 1888.

It is symptomatic of the hillbilly's figure, who replaced the enslaved black man, present in the possible aforementioned rejected sketch, to gain these colors so tied to the idea of freedom. It is worth noting the fact that the figuration of the carter differs from that of the black man in the final version. If the first directs his gaze to the scene, though without making any gesture that allows suggesting his immediate adherence to the troops' movement (such as the act of taking off the hat and swinging it on the top of their heads, as the members of the Emperor's entourage), the enslaved man, with his hoe,<sup>58</sup> in the sketch, would join the others of the scene with enthusiasm, as if Independence consisted in a universal aspiration. This solution

55. On the period, see Alonso (2015).

56. With the Slavery Abolition, on May 13, 1888, Américo outlined an allegorical painting called *Libertação dos Escravos* [Emancipation of Slaves], in which a highlighted and centered woman appears wearing a green mantle and a kind of yellow collar that closely resembles the official garments D. Pedro II used to wear on solemn occasions such as the Speech from the Throne (ceremony painted by the same artist in 1875). This figure can be associated with Princess Isabel and her future reign.

57. Historical Archive of the National Museum of Fine Arts.

58. Interestingly, the artist Manuel Madrugá (1882–1951), in the decorative painting executed in 1942 for the Noble Hall of the Brazilian Military Club, located in the downtown of Rio de Janeiro, preferred to portray the Independence scene based on Américo's sketch, and not on the final version preserved at Museu Paulista. Hence, the figure holding the hoe in his hand, in the left corner, was resumed, but with his skin color slightly ambiguous.

59. On the Moreaux canvas, see Schwarcz (2009).

60. Rosenberg (1998, p. 90).

61. Figueiredo (1999 [1888], p. 20) (Emphasis added by the author).

adopted by Américo in the sketch resembles, somehow, that executed by François-René Moreaux for the canvas of analogous theme, but painted 44 years earlier.<sup>59</sup> Although the French artist did not include any black man on the painting, there is the idea of reconciling individuals for the occasion of Independence. As we perfectly know, thanks to the study by Liana Rosenberg, Américo had reservations about Moreaux's composition: "It's a totally limp canvas. There are more people on foot; [there are] more old women and children than the Prince's entourage."<sup>60</sup>

The carter is not resting, but working; he drives his ox-wagon that transports logs from one place to another. Clearly taken by surprise, the position of the hillbilly's body suggests a sudden stop so as to decrease the speed of the wagon, since the oxen are still moving. From this figure, Américo presents the complex relationship between the free and mixed-race population, Independence, and the contemporary political situation of the painting's composition. We may clearly note there are three figures occupying all this diagonal plane outside the central axis of the scene: the hillbilly in the foreground, though above, and at the same level of the Prince's entourage, a man wearing typically Paulista clothes, who lowers his hat at the height of the saddle, perhaps in respect (but without suggesting a movement of involvement as those of the troop), and, in the background, the aforementioned black man, barefoot, with a donkey and walking in the opposite direction. According to the painter himself, this animal was "unworthy" to be part of the prince's mount, but it is unreservedly placed with the black man. According to Américo:

Thus, for example, when the companions of D. Pedro told us that His Highness, at the most solemn moment of that memorable afternoon, randomly rode a dark horse, stating a certain popular tradition that he rode, actually, a brown donkey (a brownish beast, disseminated as a true thing in Pindamonhangaba), there is no doubt that the painter, in the moral and artistic interest of his work, should prefer the first statement, even when the most proper considerations, based on the importance of the rider and the circumstance of his next venture into the city, do not oppose the likelihood of the second.<sup>61</sup>

There is no denying that Pedro Américo diversifies social types, as well as inserts the "three races" in a fairly hierarchical way: the whites occupy a significant number within the composition, they are those of the entourage of the prince and his troop. On the other hand, the hillbilly, fruit of the mixture of white and indigenous people, appears in the foreground, but in the left corner, outside the plane in which the main scene takes place. The other rider above, kind of a cattle dealer, is fully dressed and differs from the other figures in this "accessory" axis of the composition. Finally, almost as a detail, the black man silently "fleeing" from the



composition, away and in the lower plane in relation to the main scene. Together, these three figures cannot be understood as “mere accessories,” as if they were only there “to remember the usual placidity of those locations, an unexpected play of the extraordinary scene,” as Américo stated in his booklet. By interrupting the movements of the carter and the rider, or, in the case of the black man, a displacement opposed to the focus of the narrative, the artist creates a divergence regarding the central arrangement, in which the gesture of raising swords as a sense of loyalty to the prince takes over.

The paintings by Almeida Jr. acquired by Cesário Motta Jr., somehow, broaden the narrative of the lateral edges of Américo’s canvas, providing to the dynamics of the monument a new presence, highlighting the hillbilly. In addition to the “landscape,” the hillbilly gains a documentary and historical prominence along with the big canvas for celebrating the Independence of Brazil. Although, comparatively, the dimensions of the canvases prevent the presence of the anonymous subject of the countryside as a central figure, it is noteworthy the insertion of another imaginary, which, together with the political meaning of the monument, brings to light a deviation of the historical narrative emulated until then (Figure 6). The paintings *Caipira picando fumo* [Brazilian hillbilly making cigars] (Figure 7) and *Amolação Interrompida* [Interrupted task] (Figure 8), therefore, although smaller and limited to a figure that, in the first case, remains oblivious in its activity and, in the second, welcomes the spectator in a naïve way, both carry a monumentality<sup>62</sup> in their composition, in such a way that “typical” social subject of the São Paulo backlands gains respect. Moreover, the centrality attributed by Almeida Jr. to an anonymous figure, which does not tell us nothing but a moment of the ordinary countryside life, is a radical transformation of the understanding of the Noble Hall of Museu Paulista, previously treated in the discourses as space reserved for heroic acts of the nation.<sup>63</sup> Thus, this set that overflows from Américo’s central image disarticulates the factual political narrative, or that of “illustrious characters,” attributing value to another, that of the human occupation of the hinterlands, territories independently conquered, and the singular culture of São Paulo and Brazilian countryside, and not that of State institutions. Privileging a narrative in which the ancestor who combined white and indigenous people form the nation of the “natural-born” American.

We may believe that this narrative was unfounded, since Pedro Américo’s painting would only be assembled in the Noble Hall after Almeida Jr. had painted the hillbillies in the size of the lateral niches. In fact, after the arrival of Américo’s canvas in 1890, it would only be assembled in 1893 in Chicago for the “Columbian” exposition, and then, in 1895, for the opening of the Museu Paulista. Interestingly, the assembly at Museu Paulista was supervised by Almeida Jr.,<sup>64</sup> which, in a certain

62. See Pitta (2013).

63. Both in the aforementioned laws that regulate the Museu Paulista, and in the very conception of Pedro Américo’s canvas.

64. Ihering (AMP/FMP Book L4). He says: “On January 29, under the direction of Almeida Jr., the boxes were opened and P. Américo’s canvas was hanged, but the frame was broken, demanding repairs and the use of scaffolding.”



Figures 6a and 6b – Images (altered) of the Hall of Honor of the Museu Paulista: of similar dimensions, *Caipira picando fumo* [Brazilian hillbilly making cigars] and *Amolação interrompida* [Interrupted task] perfectly fit into the empty spaces left by Bezzi, and which will be later occupied by the portraits of Empress Leopoldina and Maria Quitéria in the 1920s. Reproduction: Helio Nobre; José Rosael.



Figure 7 – José Ferraz de Almeida Jr. *Caipira picando fumo* [Brazilian hillbilly making cigars], 1894, oil painting, 200 x 141 cm. Collection of the Pinacoteca de São Paulo. Transferred from the Museu Paulista, 1905. Reproduction: Isabella Matheus



Figure 8 – José Ferraz de Almeida Jr. *Amolação interrompida* [Interrupted task], 1894, oil painting, 200 x 140 cm. Collection of the Pinacoteca de São Paulo. Transferred from the Museu Paulista, 1905. Reproduction: Isabella Matheus.

65. *Correio Paulistano*, June 15, 1888: "There were many days without news on the part of the press of the court on the completion of the historical painting by Pedro Américo on the Independence of Brazil, but there were already several photographic reproductions of such. We can now say that we have seen one of them exposed in the window of the Garraux house [...]."

66. Doc. 1492. *Letter from Pedro Américo to Barão de Ramalho*. August 5, 1888. Barão de Ramalho Collection – ARQ – 14 / Permanent Archive of Museu Paulista/Fundo Museu Paulista. See Lima Junior (2015; 2016).

67. By the documentation preserved in the museum archive we cannot explain the reasons why such an undertaking was not carried out, nor the characters that would be portrayed.

68. According to Pitta (2013, p. 405): "It is fair to think that Almeida Júnior conceived his work in a direct relationship with that of the painter from Paraíba. So far, no 'script' has been found for Almeida's painting, neither documentation that clearly indicates there has been a commission. There are documents regarding the approval of the purchase of the canvas on the part of the State of São Paulo, in addition to correspondence that suggest this expectation, implicitly indicating the existence of a preexisting agreement for executing the painting."

69. Published in *Almanach Literario de São Paulo*, 1883, *op. cit.* The yearbook gathered literary texts, poetry, articles, and several texts on the history of São Paulo.

way, corroborates his very close participation in the museum. However, it is known that the photography of Américo's canvas had circulated already in 1888,<sup>65</sup> in the year when the artist concluded it and exhibited it in his atelier in Italy, when it was presented to the Emperor and other personalities linked to the Fine Arts of Florence and royal family's homes in Europe. All in all, it seems that Pedro Américo would not only receive the commission of the oversized painting. In a letter sent to Barão de Ramalho, dated August 30, 1888, in which he mentions the completion of the huge canvas, Pedro Américo also refers to another possible commission on the part of the Committee responsible for building the museum, of "[...] **two more portraits** required to the decoration of the Hall of Honor of the palace under construction on the glorious hill."<sup>66</sup> It is known that these portraits were not executed, but it makes us wonder that, therefore, there was a decorative design project for the Hall beyond the presence of the Cry of Ipiranga, which, for unknown reasons, have not been carried out.<sup>67</sup>

Therefore, if when painting two Brazilian hillbillies for the Noble Hall of the museum Almeida Jr. did not actually know Pedro Américo's canvas yet, certainly the artist was completely unaware of it when initiating the studies on *Partida da Monção* [Expedition Departure] in 1895, and the comparison of the two great paintings is paramount.<sup>68</sup> Cesário Motta Jr. was no longer secretary, but president of the recently inaugurated History and Geography Institute of São Paulo, and, as previously mentioned, the painting is based on a text of his authorship published in 1883, *Porto-Feliz e as monções de Cuiabá* [Porto-Feliz and the Cuiabá expedition].<sup>69</sup> Moreover, it is unlikely that Almeida Jr. did not articulate this six-meter-wide painting with the others of the museum, since no other place would have space to display a history painting.

When comparing the artworks, it is remarkable how *Partida da monção* [Expedition Departure] differs from *Independência ou morte!* [Independence or death!] in every way. If in Américo's canvas we see a kind of a war scene, with a central core of officers clearly governing the movement of the guards below and concentrating the attention to the hillbilly in the foreground, in Almeida Jr.'s the main scene takes place on the edge of the river, with a priest conducting a baptism ceremony and, on the background, the captain-major together with Porto Feliz population, besides not consisting in the organizing element. Almeida Jr.'s painting cannot be compared with the river at the center of the image, dividing the scene into a large diagonal of two groups, the travelers and those who are saying their goodbyes. In addition, the narrated fact does not mark a specific day or a certain expedition, but generally addresses the displacement towards the countryside. Despite this organization, whose focus is on the bond between those who boarded on the river and the land, action takes place and people gathered in the several

small scenes that unfold. In its fragmentation, there is no articulating pole, but the image gathers constitutive elements in which the two masses of people articulate in an equation. There are multiple genre paintings that constitute a historical image. The heroic narrative of the expedition endeavor takes place in such a way we see a melancholy departure, and therefore, it does not create an auspicious imagination, but shows a tenacious action of a diverse group of people. Moreover, illustrating the departure instead of the arrival or the adventures throughout the path marks the movement of those who leave São Paulo/Porto Feliz and does not focus on the conquest, but rather on its nativity. It is not a victory, such as that instituted by the monarch of Américo, but rather the exaltation of a collective endeavor and its root.

Unlike the first two hillbillies, the great historical painting by Almeida Jr. resembles Pedro Américo's in size, but we have no knowledge about whether there was any prediction on the part of the artists for the place where a painting of such dimensions would be hanged. *Partida da monção* [Expedition Departure] is hanged in the museum only in 1901, after a small renovation for its exhibition, that is, two years after the death of the painter. The canvas was hanged at the top of the staircase in front of the Noble Hall, exactly on the opposite wall (Figures 9a and 9b) of the *Independência ou morte!* [Independence or death!] painting. The image of the expedition historically precedes the 1822 Independence, thus creating, at the entrance of the hall, a chronological narrative with the canvas inside the hall and connecting Brazilian hillbillies unaware of the Cry of Ipiranga scene with the history of the formation of the Paulista people and their occupation in the hinterlands. As Cesário Motta Jr. described himself, in 1883:

[After the discovery of the gold mines at the beginning of the XVIII century], the competition among explorers has greatly intensified; the Captaincy was populated; so, not only the search for gold, but also the supply of natural or manufactured products, which it lacked, drawn the attention of traders from other Captaincies. The caravans from which they were departing were called expeditions. [...] "Discovering all the gold and stone mines that have greatly enriched their descendants, making these and themselves poor".<sup>70</sup>

Therefore, it was after discovering the gold that the countryside of the "captaincy" was populated, and the movement of widening the borders lies with the expeditions as well as the effective occupation of western lands. The descendants of those explorers and traders who risked their lives in the journey towards the countryside were poor with the end of mining production, but were organized according to the hillbilly culture. The expedition, therefore, precedes the sense of autonomy that political independence complies as an official representation. The

70. Published in *Almanach Literario de São Paulo*, 1883, *op. cit.* The yearbook gathered literary texts, poetry, articles, and several texts on the history of São Paulo.

contemporary Brazilian hillbilly was interested in the Independence, for being the embryo of the subject who lived unaware of the colonial rules, the development of a "truly" American people. Hence, within a narrative of diverse representation, which is consistent with the most radical republicanism of individual independence and federalism. As noted by Fernanda Pitta, the painting of the expedition scene used contemporary elements to express the past:

The landscape would be the one observed by the author in the region of Porto Feliz as well as the characters, boats, and other objects. A kind of a mosaic of figures and small situations aimed at creating an image of the past based on present data, feeding on the criteria of naturalist observation and notation of the genre painting in order to adapt them to the history painting [...] [as further observed] The characters of *Partida da Monção* are almost all contemporary portraits of "peasant" kinds observed by Almeida Júnior based on the hillbilly figures of the period: they are similar to their hillbilly hunters, farmers, and other kinds represented in his regionalist paintings in every way.<sup>71</sup>

The characters of the departure scene were the hillbillies, not their ancestors. Thus, Almeida Jr. created an image that corroborated the *caipirismo* (rural aspect) expressed in Cesário Motta Jr., subtracting indigenous people and part of the black population, focusing on the peasant man of the present, together with the speech of the mixed-race people, placing this social subject as the central figure of the caravans. This human aspect, added to the idea of a movement carried out by a mass of people, and not limited to a central figure, leads the observer to interpret the Independence Monument from a different perspective, but not opposed to that of Pedro Américo, in which a kind of "manifest destiny" was subtly placed in its own customs and passages that focus on the countryside population. Independence was a broader path than that of the political sphere, it was reconducted by the edge of the political scene of Pedro Américo's canvas, towards the centrality of the history of the peasant population from São Paulo. An *ethos* as singular as problematic, which would be deftly dismantled a few years later with the transfer of these canvases from the Independence Monument to the Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo. Depriving the historical sense of those images of the hillbilly, they would gain new senses for being deemed as art, less political and more folkloric. In the case of *Partida da monção* [Expedition Departure], the canvas would return to Museu Paulista in 1929, but in an absolutely diverse context. Exposed in the Expeditions room created by Afonso de Taunay, the painting was then appropriate to illustrate the past detached from its creation related to the rural aspect of Cesário Motta Jr. and Almeida Jr.



Figure 9a – At the level of the staircase, the visitor would stumble upon *Partida da Monção* [Expedition Departure] before entering the museum and seeing the *Independência ou morte!* [Independence or death!] painting.

72. Manuel (1906).

73. REPORT (1895, p. 15).  
Emphasis added.



Figure 9b – Photograph referring to the top of the central staircase of Museu do Ipiranga, taken between 1901 and 1905. It is noteworthy the presence of *Partida da Monção* in detail, hung in the anteroom of the Noble Hall.<sup>72</sup>

In Ihering's 1895 report, in the part devoted to "arrangements for the incoming year," Ihering already had some reservations about the permanence of this gallery inside the museum, justifying it not only by the lack of space in the building, but also by the affinity of such artworks to the celebratory nature of the monument, to the Hall of Honor, in particular:

The Hall of Honor is full of paintings intended for this gallery, and so are all the halls intended for the Museum – unfortunately. In this sense, it would be convenient for the Congress to create a Museum of Fine Arts independent of this Museum. This will also be convenient for the museum's Hall of Honor, which in this case could be **adorned as it should, that is, in harmony with the subject and the architecture of the hall. The interests of the Monument require paintings not only as those randomly provided, but in absolute harmony with the architecture and addressing historical matters.** Furthermore, it would be convenient for the Congress to deliberate, as required by the interest of national artists and the artistic ornamentation of the Ipiranga Monument.<sup>73</sup>



Ihering's words demonstrate the position of the director concerning the acquisition of paintings to the museum, which, according to him, are "randomly provided," disregarding, thus, the "interest of the Monument," that is, paintings that should be "in absolute harmony with the architecture and addressing historical matters." The "artistic gallery" gathered paintings that did not address historical matters, such as still life and landscapes, and which were acquired to the extent painters exhibited them in the city, and were not, therefore, executed for fitting in the architecture of the Hall of Honor. Such positioning of the director was possibly linked to the guidelines of the Bill that created the Museu Paulista in 1893, which aimed at

74. Taunay (1937, p. 46).

75. On the division between "Artistic Gallery" and a collection of "history" portraits as well as the insertion of works in these collections between 1893 and 1905. See Nery (2015).

Art. 3<sup>rd</sup> In addition to collections of natural sciences: zoology, botany, mineralogy, etc. – there shall be a section for National History in the Museum and especially dedicated to collecting and archiving documents related to the period of our political independence.

Parag. 1<sup>st</sup> In galleries and appropriate places of the building shall be placed statues, busts, or oil portraits of Brazilian citizens who, in any field of activity, have provided undeniable services to the Homeland and deserve, on the part of the State, the consecration of their works or deeds and the perpetuation of their memory.

[...]

Parag. 4<sup>th</sup> In the same Museu Paulista there shall be a spot for Pedro Américo's painting, celebrating the Independence and other matters of the Brazilian history and customs, commissioned or presented to the State.<sup>74</sup>

Some portraits commissioned to the painter Benedito Calixto during Ihering's management, such as that of D. Pedro I and José Bonifácio, refer to a collection of history portraits that, on their turn, composed a history collection tied to the more objective conception of political history and the characters' history.<sup>75</sup> Canvases remained in the Hall of Honor, as Afonso Taunay informs us in his 1925 Survey, before being displaced to other spaces of the museum, when the building was remodeled for the 1922 celebrations, and before hanging commissioned portraits painted by Oscar Pereira da Silva.

Ihering's desire for exhibiting the canvases in harmony with the architecture was only satisfied in Taunay's management. The spots intended for paintings designed by the architect and engineer Bezzi were occupied by this director, who received the portraits of historical characters and episodes of national history. In addition to these empty spaces, the very ornaments, such as the circular spots for round canvases, were used as support to receive the appropriate canvases, radically transforming the narrative of the Hall of Honor, but still maintaining Pedro Américo's painting and, above all, the place for celebrating the nation's foundation.

76. Op.cit. (1920, p. 487).

77. For the management period of Afonso Taunay and his decorative project of Museu Paulista, see Chiarelli (1998); Mattos (2003); Brefe (2005).

78. On the hiring of the artists, see Lima Junior (2015; 2019).

79. APPENDIX VI "Response to the meeting of the State Government regarding a project for broadening the museum, according to the incoming centenary celebrations." See Taunay (1920).

80. Letter from Afonso d'Escragnolle Taunay to Basílio de Magalhães. July 30, 1919. APMP/FMP. Series: *Correspondências*. Folder no. 109. We find the following inscription at the top of the letter "First ideas about the decoration of the staircase; fully modified over the course of time."

## BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 7 AND JULY 2: (NEW) IMPASSES ON THE DECORATIVE DESIGN PROJECT OF THE HALL OF HONOR

*"It shall be a Museum worthy of a great city and peace for sustaining confrontation with any other."*<sup>76</sup>

At the end of February 1917, the historian Afonso d'Escragnolle Taunay took over the position of director of Museu Paulista. Preparing the interior of the building for the celebrations of the Independence Centenary, which would occur in September 1922, was Taunay's aim, together with the key members of the politics of the State of São Paulo.<sup>77</sup> To do so, Brazilian artists, residing in São Paulo, or connected to the National School of Fine Arts of Rio de Janeiro, and also many foreigners, especially Italians, were hired by the director, from 1919 onward, aiming at recreating selected historical scenes in paintings that would be exhibited in the empty spaces of the "building-monument."<sup>78</sup> Drafted still in 1919 and addressed to the state government in the same year, the project<sup>79</sup> submitted by Taunay proposed, in a detailed way, a narrative of the history of the political independence, which substantially differs from that presented, although partially completed, on September 7, 1922, when the museum reopened its doors to the public.

As we shall see, in this 1919 text, taking sides of certain historical names and matters, at the expense of so many others, to be resumed in paintings within the museum, would guide the historical and visual narrative about the political emancipation of Brazil. Ideas contained in this project were, however, modified "over the course of time," in the words of Taunay himself.<sup>80</sup>

In the light of documents preserved in the Museu Paulista archive, we can accompany the backstage of the slow elaboration of this project, which was not limited to an isolated Taunay's decision, within his cabinet, but involved a wide negotiation between several agents such as intellectuals, artists, and politicians of the time. The confrontation of sources, such as letters, official statements, reports, and paintings, commissioned by the museum board, allows us to understand dilemmas somewhat obscured about the first moments of the writing of this decorative project, whose emphasis greatly lays on the importance of São Paulo – understood as the *locus* of Independence – and on the role of Paulista men in the conduction and in the destinies of the homeland history.

In his report on the operation of the Museum in 1919, addressed to the Department of the Interior for consideration, Afonso Taunay would include among the appendixes a document entitled "Response to the meeting of the State Government regarding a project for broadening the museum, according to the incoming centenary celebrations." The ideas gathered there comprised the synthesis of information raised by Taunay among his acquaintances throughout 1919. Thus, Basílio de Magalhães, born in Minas Gerais state, member of the Brazilian History and Geography Institute (IHGB) and author of studies on Independence, Teodoro Sampaio, born in Bahia state, member of the History and Geography Institute of Bahia (IGHB) – and of the History and Geography Institute of São Paulo (IHGSP) –, and also Capistrano de Abreu, his longtime master, were consulted a priori by the director aiming at thinking of names of historical personalities and events that could feature in the empty niches left by the sculptor Tommaso Bezzi by the end of the installation of paintings and sculptures intended to the assembly of the Independence pantheon.

Taunay would reserve the central axis of the building for the assembly of the monument, comprising the lobby, staircase, and Hall of Honor. Overall, while the hall was reserved for featuring "the first manifestations of independence of the national spirit," which from his perspective included the Inconfidência Mineira movement, the War of the Emboabas, and the War of the Mascates, in the staircase, in turn, besides the Bandeirantes' statues, Taunay predicted "paintings referring to the great events near September 7," in addition to those that would refer to the "repugnance for the invader foreign peoples" such as the banishment of the French and the Dutch during the Colony.<sup>81</sup>

Within this interpretative key on the history of Brazil, whose emphasis lays on the war,<sup>82</sup> the defense of the territory, the formation of the national spirit from the conquest, even before Brazil becomes an independent country, Taunay's intentions for the Hall of Honor are noteworthy, which already comprised Pedro Américo's *Independência ou Morte!* [Independence or death!] canvas since 1895, year of the opening of the museum:

In front of the Pedro Américo's canvas there is room for four panels. I believe these spaces should be occupied by historical compositions related to war episodes for the conquest of Independence, the very patriotic episodes that mainly took place in Bahia, the Madeira fight, the typification of Avilez in Rio de Janeiro, anyway, episodes which, from my perspective, are indispensable for those with less knowledge of the history of our homeland to become aware of our liberation, which did not occur by means of collusions, but was achieved thanks to the effusion of the Brazilian blood.<sup>83</sup>

81. Taunay, 1920, *passim*.

82. On the lack of violence in the paintings of the museum commissioned by Afonso Taunay, see Marins (2017).

83. Taunay (1919, p. 488). Emphasis added.

84. See Gaetgens (1998).

85. On the impact of this trip on the production of the decorative design project, see Lima Junior (in press).

It is worth noting that the choice for “war episodes” and “repugnance for the invader foreign peoples,” thought for the Hall of Honor, in 1919, seems to refer to the French example of the “Gallery of Battles,” built at the Palace of Versailles, during the reign of Louis Philip I, and open to the public in 1838.<sup>84</sup> The monarch, surrounded by professionals in order to put his project into practice, allowed to restructure the south wing of the palace, and allocate the 33 paintings of battles (from Tolbiac, from the time of the Gauls to Wagram, clash of the Napoleonic period, against the Germans). Certainly, Taunay knew such an iconographic model, since in his own travel journal, when traveling to Europe, still in July 1909, he reported that he had visited the Palace “from soup to nuts.”<sup>85</sup>

Despite all the director’s efforts in obtaining more information about the fight that took place in Bahia, in 1823, against the Portuguese troops, only one of the four “war episodes” suggested in 1919 was accomplished and painted indeed: *A retirada de Jorge de Avilez com sua tropa* [The retreat of Jorge de Avilez and his troop] (Figure 10), painted by the artist Oscar Pereira da Silva, born in Rio de Janeiro – all the others remained as mere ideas.



Figure 10 – Oscar Pereira da Silva. *O Príncipe D. Pedro e Jorge de Avilez a bordo da Fragata União* [Prince D. Pedro and Jorge de Avilez aboard the União Frigate], 1922, oil painting, 310 x 250 cm. Collection of Museu Paulista. Reproduction: Helio Nobre; José Rosael.

It is true that the war of Independence in Bahia was remembered, but in the *Maria Quitéria de Jesus* portrait (Figure 11), executed by the Italian artist Domenico Failutti, based on the painting by Augustus Earle (Figure 12) and which appears in the *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil*, by Maria Graham, published in 1824, in which the “hero of Independence” is dressed in her military uniform, highlighting the petticoat added to it.<sup>86</sup> Still, she’s not participating in the battles. Omitting the men in combat that appear in the background at the moment depicted in the painting does not seem to be a deliberate choice. In the painting, Quitéria appears alone, before the exuberant nature of the Bahia’s inlet, without a single human being.

The other “war episodes” gave way to the portrait of Empress Leopoldina surrounded by her daughters (Figure 13), with the future D. Pedro II, on her lap, also painted by Failutti, and finally, the representation of the Brazilian deputation in the Lisbon Courts, in May 1822 (Figure 14), in which Antônio Carlos Ribeiro de Andrada, brother of José Bonifácio, is the great highlight, due to the painting of Oscar Pereira da Silva.<sup>87</sup>



Figure 11 – Domenico Failutti. *Maria Quitéria de Jesus*, 1920, oil painting, 155 x 253.5 cm. Collection of Museu Paulista. Reproduction: Helio Nobre; José Rosael.

86. See Lima Junior (2016); Simioni; Lima Junior (2017); Gomes (2019).

87. See Lima Junior (2015; 2016; 2019).

Figure 12 – Augustus Earle. Dona Maria de Jesus. In: GRAHAM, Maria. *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil and residence there, during part of the years 1821, 1822, 1823*. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, Paternoster-Row; J. Murray, Albermarle-street, 1824.



Figure 13 – Domenico Failutti. *D. Leopoldina e seus filhos* [D. Leopoldina and her children], 1921, oil painting, 155 x 253.5 cm. Collection of Museu Paulista. Reproduction: Helio Nobre; José Rosael.



88. See Brefe (2005); Christo (2005); Garcez (2007).

89. See Lima; Carvalho (1994).

Figure 14 – Oscar Pereira da Silva. *Sessão das Cortes de Lisboa – 9 de maio de 1822* [Session of the Lisbon Courts – May 9, 1822], 1922, oil painting, 310 x 250 cm. Collection of Museu Paulista. Reproduction: Helio Nobre; José Rosael.

Understood as true documents, since they are based on historical elements deemed authentic, the production of the paintings of the museum were carried out under Taunay's close supervision, who did not hesitate to ask for changes whenever he deemed necessary, what resulted in many disagreements with artists, especially those from Rio de Janeiro, as demonstrated by Ana Cláudia Fonseca Brefe, Paulo César Garcez Marins, and Maraliz Christo.<sup>88</sup> Hence, contemporary works on the subject that would be portrayed were considered as matrices for executing the paintings, even though, when structuring the composition, certain elements, as noted by Vânia Carneiro de Carvalho and Solange Ferraz de Lima, were "added, emphasized, or subtracted" in discrete alterations, only perceptible when comparing the paintings with the originals that inspired them.<sup>89</sup> This is the case of the painting *Sessão das Cortes de Lisboa* [Session of the Lisbon Courts], which was based on the engraving performed by the Portuguese artist Alfredo Roque Gameiro (Figure 15),

published in *Quadros da História de Portugal*, of 1917, a copy belonging to the library of Museu Paulista, with notes from the director himself.<sup>90</sup> We do not know for sure whether it was Oscar Pereira da Silva who commented on the existence of this engraving to Taunay, or otherwise. Anyway, indeed Oscar was inspired by Gameiro's work to set the room where the "very stormy session" must have occurred. He also took advantage of the distribution of the characters seated in such a way to form a circle in front of the pulpit, but he made some significant changes, (re)elaborating and (res)ignifying the illustration of the Portuguese artist, according to the demands of his commission. In Roque Gameiro, the central figure standing in his feet, which outstands on the left side of the composition, is portrayed in Pereira da Silva on the right side, inverted, even more vertically, leaning forward, which accentuates the movement of the character, transfigured in Antônio Carlos de Andrada.

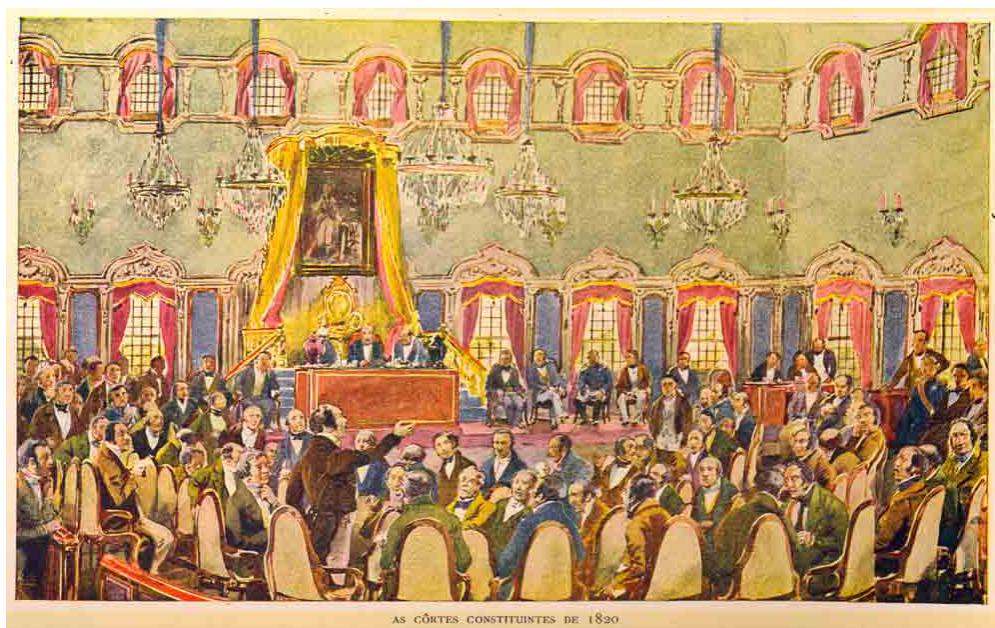


Figure 15 – Alfredo Roque Gameiro (1865–1937). *As côrtes constituintes de 1820* [The 1820s courts]. In: *Quadros da história de Portugal*. Lisbon, 1917.

On the canvas, Afonso Taunay referred to it only in his report to the Department of the Interior in 1922:

[...] the artist represented a stormy session of the Courts. That on May 9, 1822, in which Antonio Carlos and the Brazilian deputies face the recolonizing party that wants to vote for oppressive measures in Brazil. More than 80 figures populate the environment that reproduces the session room of the Courts according to engravings portraying this time.



In the foreground they discuss [illegible] the pulpit from Santos and Borges Carneiro. The canvas simulates the moment when Antonio Carlos yells: Quiet! From this pulpit even the Kings have to listen to me!<sup>91</sup>

91. Taunay (1922a, p. 735).  
Emphasis added.

92. See Oliveira (1999).

Taunay, in the short excerpt of his report previously mentioned, emphasized the date of the session that the painting of Pereira da Silva resumes: May 9, 1822. It was on this date, in front of the plenary of the Courts, that important letters written by Prince D. Pedro to his father, King D. João VI, were read, reporting the *Dia do Fico* [Day of Stay], and asking the king to “report to the Courts this poor way of proceeding,” referring to the auxiliary division headed by Avilez. The painting, in this sense, makes explicit reference to the canvas allocated to the side, dedicated to the disagreements with Jorge de Avilez, the “disobedient” commander of the Portuguese troops, banished from Rio de Janeiro by order of the prince, as we shall further see. Discussions between Antônio Carlos and the Portuguese deputies, which the painting celebrates, actually took place on May 22, when the voting of decrees regarding the commercial relationships and the interpretation of news arriving in the provinces of Brazil reporting the separation occurred. The painting, in this sense, as Cecília Helena de Salles Oliveira highlighted, focused on recreating episodes that materialize one of the interpretative axes of the separation process: the confrontation between colony and metropolis.<sup>92</sup>

It is known, by the documents consulted in Portuguese archives, there is a portrait of D. João VI, hanged above the throne, painted by Domingos António Sequeira, which was an integral part of the room where the Courts sessions took place at the Palácio das Necessidades, in Lisbon, which appears only sketched in the engraving by Gameiro, dated 1917. It is worth noting that if Roque Gameiro shows the portrait of D. João VI, even though it was painted by Sequeira one year after the 1820 meeting of the Courts, which Gameiro refers to in his illustration, Pereira da Silva deliberately hides it. One possible explanation would be the specificity, in the political sense, of each work. In Gameiro’s illustration, the Courts are gathered in 1820 contesting the absolute power of the sovereign. In the case of Pereira da Silva’s, Brazilian deputies oppose the 1822 Courts – these are the ones that supposedly “want to vote for oppressive measures in Brazil” – therefore, the threat is no longer the king.

Similarly, there was the process of the painting *O príncipe D. Pedro e Jorge de Avilez a bordo da fragata União – 8 de fevereiro de 1822* [Prince D. Pedro and Jorge de Avilez aboard the União Frigate – February 8, 1822], in which Taunay searched Henrique Boiteux, admiral of the Brazilian Navy residing in Rio de Janeiro, in order to resolve doubts in relation the features of those historical figures that surrounded the prince inside the frigate. Taunay would also explain in his 1922 report his intentions with that painting:

93. Taunay (1926, p. 733).  
Emphasis added.

94. Sérié (2014, p. 22).

95. See Oliveira (1999).

[...] it is about the well-known scene of the União frigate: on February 8, 1822. Prince D. Pedro welcomes aboard Jorge de Avilez and his general staff and command the Portuguese general to immediately go to Europe with all Portuguese troops. Pointing to a cannon, he proclaims: If you do not leave soon, I'll fire you, and the first shot is mine!

In this canvas we can see numerous portraits. **The Prince is surrounded by José Bonifácio**, the supreme commanders Curado and Oliveira Alvares, the minister of war, the future Marquises of Queluz and Praia Grande, Admiral De Lamare, several known generals of land and sea of the time.<sup>93</sup>

With this painting, the "heroic" attitude of D. Pedro was celebrated, concerning his choice for the "Brazilian cause," attributing quite a magnificent atmosphere to the episode – a scene that would allow resuming, within the evolutionary context proposed for the Hall of Honor, the image of Prince D. Pedro, riding on horseback, yelling "Independence or death!" on Pedro Américo's painting placed ahead.

In addition to the awareness of the importance of historical data in the construction of scenes, he was also attentive to the assumptions of history painting and its tradition. In both paintings, the figures converge to the action of the main character, and the scenes demonstrate a single action, endorsed in time and space, where the small parts combine as a whole, creating, in each of them, a narrative of easy identification, in which the historical episodes, in the words of Pierre Sérié, are portrayed in "an edifying manner, of moralizing nature, attentive to the dimension of instruction for the one that would observe it."<sup>94</sup> If, in *Sessão das Cortes*, the painter attributes excitement to the scene, Oscar Pereira da Silva does it so by raising the moral of the deputation, in a possible dialogue with the canvas *Le Serment de Jeu Paume*, by Jacques-Louis David. On the other hand, on the canvas on the banishment of Avilez's troops, the prince preserves the placidity of the hero – as on the Américo's painting in front of it – raising his arm, resuming the gestures set in the paintings of French battles of the XIX century, especially in the many representations of Napoleon Bonaparte, whether in those in which the general is inserted in the midst of the combatants, mounted on horseback, or when he was away from the battle, suggesting an order of command, transferred by Pereira da Silva to the analogous attitude of Prince D. Pedro, attributing nobleness to him.

The figurative set, presented in 1922, differs from that outlined in 1919, in which, according to Cecília Helena de Salles Oliveira, "the fights, sometimes bloody, would mark the recovery of Independence as a conquest, whose genesis should be sought in several resistance movements regarding the Portuguese domain in the colonial period."<sup>95</sup> There, with the two paintings by Pereira da Silva, the effort to represent the "colony in the fight against the metropolis" was preserved, either by

the banishment of the Portuguese troops, or by the conflicts between “Brazilians” and “Portuguese” against the “recolonization” of Brazil – an alleged national consciousness, which at that time was difficult to attribute.

The rejection of Taunay’s first ideas on the part of the government remains somewhat obscure in the documentations. Certainly, when such ideas were modified, “September 7” was established as the end of the narrative that began in the lobby. The *Independência ou Morte!* [Independence or death!] (1888) painting, by Pedro Américo, would then be considered as the culminating point of the emergence of the nation and the narrative of Independence proposed there. Highlighting the achievements of Bahia in the war, and its victory on July 2, 1823, as proposed in 1919, it could obscure the “September 7, 1822” and all the symbolic discourse that tied this date to the place of the “cry of Ipiranga,” occurred in the vicinity of Ipiranga river, therefore, in São Paulo lands – where the museum is located. They integrated, within the hall, a linear, evolutionary narrative that would lead to “September 7, 1822,” represented there by Pedro Américo’s canvas that was imposed due to the matter, but also by the significant dimensions. Bahia would be remembered in one of the signs arranged on the sides of the staircase.<sup>96</sup> In the configuration of the monument presented (partially complete) in 1922, the Independence would have, therefore, São Paulo as a scenario, and its people, the Paulistas, as protagonists, immortalized in the paintings that would celebrate their acts deemed heroic in the conquest by the separation from Portugal.

In the spot above *Independência ou Morte!* [Independence or death!], Taunay allocated five two-meter portraits each, inserting them into circular spots for round canvases, also known as “ox’s eyes,” executed by the architect Bezzi. At the center, the portrait of D. Pedro I, besides those of José Bonifácio and José Clemente Pereira. On the walls, on opposite sides, there are those of Joaquim Gonçalves Ledo and Antônio Diogo Feijó, all executed by Oscar Pereira da Silva between 1919 and 1921.

Historically, adversities were great between the two groups of political figures presented there. On one site, there were Joaquim Gonçalves Ledo and José Clemente Pereira – known by “frankly Republican tendencies”<sup>97</sup> and “liberal tendencies” in the words of Taunay himself. On the other side, led by José Bonifácio, there was the group that fought against such ideas and were more linked to a conservative project, fearing for a “fatal breakdown of Brazil and the introduction of anarchy throughout the territory, as it occurs throughout Hispanic America, recently liberated from the colonial domain.”<sup>98</sup> For Taunay, “sharing a common purpose, efforts were taken on the part of all the patriots related or not to José Bonifácio ideals in favor of the liberation of Brazil,”<sup>99</sup> and “mutually hating each other, they both

96. “Próceres da Independência Nacional – Libertação da Bahia” [Political members of the National Independence – Bahia Liberation].

97. See Taunay (1922).

98. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 27.

100. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

101. For a detailed analysis of these portraits, see Lima Jr, *op. cit.* 2016. Regarding Ledo's portrait, see Oliveira, *op. cit.* 2017.

102. As well noted by Ulpiano Bezerra de Meneses in canonical text: In the Hall of Honor "the architecture and paintings are integrated, there are no objects in a space, there are objects creating a qualified space." Meneses (1992, p. 27).

103. Meneses (1992; 1994).

worked under the same patriotic inspiration."<sup>100</sup> The director, thus, highlighted "the unanimity and agreement required for the construction of the national identity through Independence" – by fraternizing these historical figures, of distinct ideals, around the figure of D. Pedro, and for the sake of Liberation.<sup>101</sup>

Covering more than 35 years of the conception of Pedro Américo's painting, until the creation of the Hall of Honor for the celebration of 1922, the analyzed agents denote movements between personal conceptions, external pressures, and the advancement in political and social agreements during the process of structuring a historical narrative always centered in São Paulo. Decisive for the comprehension of this dynamics, which departs from History as a discipline and approaches us to the crystallization of memories and identity, the deletions, omissions, and desires of some of these agents are precisely adapted. Therefore, far from History, the Hall of Honor was indeed a fruitful space<sup>102</sup> for celebrating the Memory.<sup>103</sup>

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