

The affinities between Eduardo Prado's political criticism and José Murilo de Carvalho's historical thought

As afinidades entre a crítica política de Eduardo Prado e o pensamento histórico de José Murilo de Carvalho

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ABSTRACT The aim of this article is to analyze the affinities between the political critique developed by Eduardo Prado at the end of the 19th century and the historical thinking of José Murilo de Carvalho, one of the principal figures in contemporary Brazilian historiography. The intention is not solely to establish a comparative bibliographical discussion between the two authors but to demonstrate how they share a critical/analytical vocabulary that constitutes the specialized historiography of the First Republic and Brazilian social thought. The text is divided into three parts: First, the analysis examines how the authors analyzed the Proclamation of the Republic as a result of the landowners' resentment towards the abolition of slavery and the leniency with which Pedro II treated the republican opposition. Subsequently, attention is turned to their criticism of 'bachelorism,' which they interpreted as a vice of Brazilian social formation. Lastly, the examination of how Prado and Carvalho treated political militarism as the principal defect of the Republic in Brazil is presented.

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RESUMO O objetivo deste artigo é analisar as afinidades entre a crítica política desenvolvida por Eduardo Prado no final do século XIX e o pensamento histórico de José Murilo de Carvalho, um dos principais nomes da historiografia brasileira contemporânea. Não é minha intenção, tão somente, estabelecer uma discussão bibliográfica de natureza comparativa entre os dois autores, mas sim mostrar como eles compartilham um vocabulário crítico/analítico que constitui não apenas a historiografia especializada na Primeira República, mas também o pensamento social brasileiro. O texto está dividido em três partes: primeiro, examino como os autores analisaram a Proclamação da República como resultado do ressentimento dos proprietários com a abolição da escravidão e da leniência com a qual D. Pedro II teria tratado as oposições republicanas. Em seguida, me dedico às críticas que eles direcionaram ao bacharelismo, interpretado como um vício da formação social brasileira. Por último, analiso como Prado e Carvalho trataram o militarismo político como o principal defeito da República no Brasil.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE Eduardo Prado, José Murilo de Carvalho, pensamento social brasileiro

A voracious opponent of the military intervention of November 1889, Eduardo Prado was the inspiration for the most scathing criticism of the impasses surrounding the Proclamation of the Republic in Brazil, which for decades marked the history of the regime: bachelorism, militarism and authoritarianism (Carvalho, 2001, p. 323, our translation).

INTRODUCTION

On August 30, 2001, the members of the Brazilian Academy of Letters (ABL) gathered at the iconic Petit Trianon palace to celebrate the centenary of the death of São Paulo writer Eduardo Paulo da Silva Prado

(1860-1901), a founding member who held chair number 40 for four years. José Murilo de Carvalho (1939-2023), a historian from Minas Gerais who, at the time, held chair number 5, led the proceedings. The choice was no coincidence, as José Murilo knew, like few others, the life and work of Eduardo Prado, who made a name for himself in the transition from the 19th to the 20th century by confronting the first Republican governments in defense of the restoration of the monarchy. Throughout the 1890s, Prado wrote the main texts attacking the republican institutions founded in November 1889, particularly the books *Fastos da Ditadura Militar Brasileira* [The Annals of the Brazilian Military Dictatorship], published in 1890, and *A Ilusão Americana* [The American Illusion], published in 1893.

Six years later, José Murilo de Carvalho would once again use the ABL's space to address Eduardo Prado's intellectual career. At the end of 2007, the academic presented his peers with a conference entitled *Eduardo Prado e a Polêmica do Iberismo e do Americanismo* [Eduardo Prado and the Controversy Over Iberism and Americanism], in which he examined Prado's contributions to the development of an Iberian intellectual tradition in Brazilian social thought, committed to highlighting the positive aspects of Iberian and Catholic colonization in the tropics, contrasting them with the individualistic utilitarianism that characterized English colonization. For Carvalho, Eduardo Prado's texts, especially *A Ilusão Americana*, are seminal for discussions involving Brazilian national identity, "seen by Prado as a historical fact in movement and not as a static essence" (Carvalho, 2008, p. 82).

My objective in this article is to examine the affinities between the political criticism formulated by Eduardo Prado and the historical thought of José Murilo de Carvalho. The text is divided into three parts: first, I examine how the authors interpreted the Proclamation of the Republic as a consequence of the resentment of slaveholding owners over the abolition of slavery and the permissiveness with which Emperor D. Pedro II purportedly treated republican opposition. Next, I delve into the treatment that Prado and Carvalho gave to *bacharelism*, which for them was a political/intellectual vice not only of the Republic but

of Brazilian social formation itself. Lastly, I analyze the criticisms that the authors directed at political militarism, which is defined as one of the main defects of the Republic in Brazil.

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE PROCLAMATION OF THE REPUBLIC

The men who gathered in Itu at the time were slaveholders and, out of hatred for the liberating Empire, they became republicans. It was only natural. The Empire was freedom and so they went over to the Republic, which in South America always means the confiscation of all freedoms [...]. The Empire was overthrown just when it was most loved by the people, after the end of slavery (Prado, 1897, our translation).¹ There was a clear gap between representation and public opinion, which for the first time was being organized and made visible in the abolitionist movement. Imperial pressure in favor of final abolition coincided with public opinion, although it was interpreted as interference in the parliamentary process, the same accusation made in 1871. Ironically, the king, in this case the princess, sided with the opinion of the people, thereby losing legitimacy with the parties and the political elite (Carvalho, 1988, p. 41, our translation).

Eighty-one years separate the two quotes. In 1897, Eduardo Prado was the owner of the newspaper *O Comércio de São Paulo*, which, at the time, was the primary press outlet serving the cause of monarchical restoration. On March 18, Prado utilized the pages of his newspaper to publish an article entitled *O Golpe Escravagista Contra o Império da Liberdade* [The Pro-Slavery Coup Against the Empire of Liberty], in which he established a cause-and-effect relationship between the abolition of slavery and the Proclamation of the Republic. In the author's

1 No page.

argument, the leaders involved in founding the Republican Party had direct interests in maintaining slavery, which would have been contradicted by Emperor Pedro II's commitment to the abolitionist journey. Prado reconstructs the chronology of abolitionist legislation, starting with the Free Womb Law in 1871 and ending with the Golden Law in 1888, stating that the "Brazilian monarch was the first abolitionist, a visceral enemy of the iniquitous institution that for so long impeded Brazil's march towards civilization" (Prado, 1897). By advocating so strenuously for the end of slavery, Pedro II would have collided with the interests of the "barons of land and men," and this would explain the Proclamation of the Republic, defined as the "resentful action of those who hate freedom and love slavery" (Prado, 1897). By distancing himself from the landowning elite, Pedro II "drew closer to the people, who recognized the monarch's commitment to ending slavery." The monarchy was overthrown, therefore, when it was most popular, "most loved by the nation, with the exception of the owners of souls, who wished to remain so." The Republic would have been a kind of mismatch between power and the people, who remained "in love with the Emperor and the symbols of the Monarchy" (Prado, 1897). At the time of the text's publication, Prado had been opposing the young Brazilian Republic for almost a decade. In the days following November 15, 1889, the author engaged in the conflict, becoming the main leader of the restoration movement (Berriel, 2003; Janoti, 1993; Leonzo, 2003)². In December 1889, using the pseudonym Frederico da S., Eduardo Prado published the article *Os Acontecimentos do Brasil* [The Events in Brazil] in the journal *Revista de Portugal*, edited by Eça de Queirós (1845–1900), with whom he had close friendships. Until May 1890, the magazine would publish four more combat articles in which Prado attempted to undermine the credibility of the new regime in European public opinion.

2 Studies specializing in the monarchist movement during the early years of the Republic are unanimous in highlighting Eduardo Prado's leadership among restorationist politicians and intellectuals, such as Afonso Arinos, Theodoro Sampaio, Brásílio Machado, Joaquim Nabuco, João Mendes Jr, Couto de Magalhães Sobrinho and Carlos de Laet.

The five articles were compiled at the end of 1890 in *Fastos da Ditadura Militar no Brasil*, making their author a target of the Republican military dictatorship led by Floriano Peixoto³.

In 1988, the first edition of the book *O Teatro das Sombras: A Política Imperial* [The Theater of Shadows: Imperial Politics] was published, in which José Murilo de Carvalho analyzes the political history of the Brazilian monarchy between the end of the 1830s and the beginning of the 1880s, during which the regime managed to establish itself on a more solid institutional basis, after the turbulence of the regency. According to Carvalho, this institutional stability was achievable thanks to the “dialectic of ambiguity” (a term borrowed from Guerreiro Ramos) that characterized the relationship between the state and the political and economic elites in imperial Brazil. By analyzing the “economy of nobiliary titles” and the monarchy’s budget, Carvalho demonstrates how the regime solidified itself through symbolic and economic gestures towards the landowning classes linked to the large coffee plantations while remaining distant from the rest of the population. The logic of ambiguity would have been reversed from the 1870s onwards when the emperor began to advocate the abolition of slavery. The monarch then aligned with “public opinion,” which, according to José Murilo de Carvalho, was organized for the first time in the abolitionist movement. In doing so, Pedro II severed relations with the landowning elites, which ultimately cost him the throne. Following the analytical path blazed by Eduardo Prado, José Murilo de Carvalho defines the promulgation of the Free Womb Law in 1871 as the beginning of this estrangement, which would culminate on November 15, 1889.

3 According to biographers Candido da Motta Filho and Sebastião Pagano, Eduardo Prado fled Brazil in July 1893, shortly after the publication of his book *A Ilusão Americana*, when the government led by Floriano Peixoto ordered his arrest. As the port of Rio de Janeiro was monitored by the army, the escape would have taken place through the port of Salvador, where Prado arrived after crossing the backlands of Bahia. His destination was Paris, where he continued to write against the Republic. He only returned to Brazil in 1895, after the civilians took control of the regime.

The imperial system began to collapse in 1871 after the free womb law. It was the first clear indication of divorce between the king and the barons, who saw the law as dynastic madness. The divorce was accentuated by the sexagenarian law and the final abolition. It is a fact accepted by all scholars, for example, that adherence to republicanism increased substantially at the time of abolitionist measures [...] The monarchy failed, then, not because it was ineffective, but, on the contrary, because it promoted or facilitated action against dominant groups, without at the same time building a power base that would replace or balance that of the owners of the land (Carvalho, 1988, p. 124, our translation).

The free-womb law, in 1871, was the beginning of the drift that would result in the military pronouncement of November 1889. The liberation of the womb was definitive proof that Your Majesty was on the side of the popular clamor for freedom and against the petty interests of landowners in the possession of souls (Prado, 1897, our translation).

As a result of a conspiracy organized by dissatisfied slave owners, the “Republic in Brazil” suffered from an “original sin,” a term that José Murilo de Carvalho used in a book published in 2017: “the absence of the people, which left deep marks on the country’s political life” (Carvalho, 2017, p. 11). Exactly 120 years earlier, Eduardo Prado stated something similar: “In Brazil, the Republic was born in divorce with the people” (Prado, 1897). Due to this divorce, José Murilo de Carvalho argues, the Republic worked diligently to construct a symbolic apparatus to “form souls,” spreading its propaganda beyond elite circles, which “could not be done through discourse, inaccessible to a public with low formal education. It had to be done through more universal, easier-to-understand signs, such as images, allegories, symbols, and myths” (Carvalho, 1990, p. 10).

Eduardo Prado also identified this symbolic effort on the part of the first republican governments to seduce the populace, who persisted

“in loving the insignia of the Monarchy and ironized with carelessness the attempt of the ignominious Republic to try to imitate the rites of Catholicism” (Prado, 1897). Eduardo Prado did not explore the initial symbolic efforts of the Brazilian Republic, such as the idealization of the new flag and anthem and the transformation of Tiradentes into a national hero. José Murilo de Carvalho did so in his book *A Formação das Almas* [The Formation of Souls], published in 1990. Nonetheless, the argument that the Republic was unpopular and employed these symbolic resources to connect with the population is fully formulated in the manuscript by Eduardo Prado, who pointed out what he believed to be the mockery and disdain of the ‘people’ in relation to republican symbolism.

In the book *Os Bestializados* [The Bestialized], published in 1987, José Murilo de Carvalho argued similarly, saying that at the beginning of the Republic, the “people were deceptive because they knew that the formal was not serious. There were no avenues for participation; the Republic was not real” (Carvalho, 1987, p. 160). Eduardo Prado also condemned the restriction of popular participation in the early years of the Republic, asserting that “in the Monarchy, elections were more democratic and had greater enthusiasm among the population [...] what they call the Republic limited the people’s participation in political affairs” (Prado, 1897). José Murilo de Carvalho made a similar criticism in his article *Os Três Povos da República* [The Three Peoples of the Republic], published in 2002 in the collection *A República no Catete* [A Republic in Catete], organized by Maria Alice Rezende de Carvalho. According to Carvalho, the first years of republican history were turbulent, marked by “political assassinations, coups d’état, popular revolts, strikes, civil wars,” which brought the people to the forefront of political action. Later, especially after the Campos Sales government, between 1898 and 1902, “the oligarchies managed to invent and consolidate a system of power capable of managing their internal conflicts and which left the people out” (Carvalho, 2002, p. 61). Throughout the text, Carvalho presents statistical data showing how the elections held

during the First Republic had lower popular participation than those held during the monarchy⁴.

In October 1896, still under then-president Prudente de Moraes, Prado criticized the exclusionary dimension of the general elections that would take place in December of that year. In the article *Eleições* [Elections], published in *O Comércio de São Paulo*, Eduardo Prado compared the electoral behavior of Republicans and Monarchists.

The general elections are approaching, and while the republicans remain quiet, just silently contemplating the movement awaiting the despotic and indisputable manifesto of the leaders, in the monarchist camps the stirring of spirits has already begun. In this way, the monarchists reveal their virility and strength, their tendency towards discussion and the confrontation of opinions, in order to ascertain where the majority is, the true public opinion of the party, the only system that constitutes the legitimate basis for modern democracy (Prado, 1896, our translation).

On the eve of the elections, the Republicans would be quiet, waiting for orders from their superiors, while the Monarchists would be agitated, mobilizing voters. The difference in behavior would signal different ways of valuing the electoral process and democracy itself. The Republicans were 'authoritarian' and were "conspiring to build a regime of domination that excludes the people from political participation." The Monarchists, on the other hand, had "a long democratic tradition of free elections and encouraging popular participation, as the history of the Monarchy shows." In addition to the conspiracy carried out by resentful slave owners, Eduardo Prado brought another element to the

4 According to data provided by José Murilo de Carvalho (1988, 65), during the Monarchy, the number of voters reached 10.8% of the population, data relating to 1872. During the First Republic, the number never exceeded the 5.6% observed in the 1930 elections.

forefront of his analysis of the Proclamation of the Republic in Brazil: the actions of Emperor Pedro II himself.

And do not ask: where were the monarchists on November 15? They were in their homes, confident in the public peace to which the monarchy had accustomed its citizens for more than half a century, and they were unaware of the immense perfidy that was being plotted, a perfidy that stabbed the system that had always treated opposition with condescension [...] Mr. Silva Jardim, during the time of his propaganda, attended many suppers and dinners organized by the Republicans. He was the last political propagandist among us who took advantage of the wide freedom that the Empire always gave to the thought and action of its adversaries (Prado, 1897, our translation).

José Murilo de Carvalho said something quite similar.

[D. Pedro II] was accused of being too tolerant of the press and the opposition, including the republican opposition. Nothing happened to Silva Jardim when he publicly preached the firing squad of Count D'Eu. Preaching the assassination of a politician in full possession of his rights was, and still is, a crime in any democratic country. The emperor was also always opposed to excluding republicans from public office. He himself employed a republican, Benjamin Constant, as a math teacher for his grandchildren, and it did not bother him that he held various public positions (Carvalho, 2007, p. 208, our translation).

Both authors were convinced that the emperor had underestimated the risks involved in the republican mobilization, which intensified at the end of the 1870s and was led predominantly by Silva Jardim (1860-1901). Pedro II had naively exaggerated the democratic belief that

opposition ought to be tolerated, especially with respect to the events occurring within the army barracks, where the positivist bachelorism of Benjamin Constant (1836-1901) was advancing without encountering any form of resistance.

In this context, the Proclamation of the Republic was consolidated as an act of revenge on the part of landowners who were dissatisfied with the abolition of slavery, and the initial republican governments were characterized by a dictatorship that starkly contrasted with the political freedoms that had been ensured during the Second Reign by the initiative of Pedro II himself. This constitutes the core argument developed by Eduardo Prado, which reached José Murilo de Carvalho, suggesting the existence of a “communicative circuit” capable of connecting authors nearly a century apart (Darnton, 1986, p. 12). This connection was only feasible because Eduardo Prado's texts had a significant impact on the political and intellectual scene in the 1890s and were disseminated throughout the 20th century⁵ in various collections and editions, which preserved the author's bibliographical memory, thus assisting in establishing a critical tradition regarding the analysis of the early years of the Brazilian Republic.

From Jorge Amado to Guimarães Rosa, José Lins do Rego, Graciliano Ramos, Euclides da Cunha, and Gilberto Freyre, and even José Murilo de Carvalho himself, the list of interpreters of Brazil who criticized the republican modernization project implemented in the country is extensive (Barboza Filho, 2010). This tradition has become predominant in the historiography specialized in the subject, largely due to the work of José Murilo de Carvalho and his prominent position in the field of historical studies. However, this does not imply that there were no divergent interpretations that questioned the Prado-Carvalhian analytical paradigm. Maria Tereza Chaves de Mello, for example, asserts that, since the late 1870s, the monarchy was no longer perceived as a political

5 *Fastos da Ditadura Militar no Brasil* had six editions: 1890, 1901, 1923, 1954, 1987, 2001. *A Ilusão Americana* had five editions: 1893, 1921, 1967, 1983, 2003. We could also mention the four volumes of *Coletâneas*, bringing together the complete works of Eduardo Prado, published between 1901 and 1907.

system capable of resolving Brazil's problems, which indicated that the path to the Republic was facilitated by a certain degree of consensus within public opinion at the time, which would have manifested itself in the form of non-intervention.

At the end of the Empire, the monarchy was associated with backwardness, the impediment to the country's modernization, and the Republic appeared to be the solution. We assume, then, that the acceptance of the Republic [and the lack of defense of the monarchy] can be explained by a mental disposition towards the new regime as a result of the incorporation of a new democratic and scientific culture in the 1880s, taking the city of Rio de Janeiro as the spatial focus, due to its centrality in the life of the country (Mello, 2007, p. 11, our translation).

Ângela Alonso's argument holds similarities. Specifically, she exhibits an interest in the so-called '1870s generation.' Alonso argues that this intellectual movement emerged during a period marked by profound questioning of the monarchical regime.

The intellectual movement of the 1870s is one of the manifestations of the challenge to the imperial *status quo*. This contestation was broad. Both abolitionism and republicanism overlapped with the intellectual movement but were not restricted to manifestations by literate people. Popular abolitionism incorporated as effective members individuals who were outside the universe of citizens of the Empire, such as former slaves (Alonso, 2002, p. 45, our translation).

For Eduardo Prado and José Murilo de Carvalho, abolitionism served as a form of popular support allied with the monarchy when abolitionist legislation was under consideration, with the population recognizing Pedro II's commitment to the cause. Maria Tereza Chaves

de Mello (2007) and Ângela Alonso (2002), in contrast, assert that the opposite occurred, with “popular abolitionism” galvanizing public opinion against the monarchy’s capability to address the nation’s structural issues. Rather than acting as political capital in favor of the monarchy, abolitionism emerged from the organization of civil society, and the regime was consequently criticized for the sluggish pace of the abolition process. Maria Tereza Chaves de Mello also scrutinizes the purported freedom of action that the monarchy afforded the republican opposition, revealing, “the extent to which contemporaries perceived this liberalism as genuine is debatable. In various types of texts, we observe frequent complaints regarding subtle censorship, outrage over instances of interference, and police attacks on newspapers” (Mello, 2007, p. 230).

We are presented with a clash between two historiographical interpretations of the Proclamation of the Republic in Brazil, rooted in the late 19th century amidst the disputes that culminated on November 15, 1889. On one side, Republican propaganda, led by Silva Jardim, purported to have popular support and depicted the monarchy as unfit for steering the country toward modernization. These perspectives are utilized by Maria Tereza Chaves de Mello (2007) and Ângela Alonso (2002). Conversely, the monarchists, represented by Eduardo Prado, characterized the Republic as a dictatorship that halted an era of political tolerance, purportedly epitomized by the enlightened and abolitionist monarch. José Murilo de Carvalho gives precedence to these accounts. The parallels between Eduardo Prado’s writings and José Murilo de Carvalho’s historical analysis extend beyond their mutual interest in the Republic. Both scholars advance an interpretation of the national social and historical fabric, arguing that *bachelorism* constitutes a flaw in Brazilian formation.

CRITICISM OF BACHELORISM AS A *TOPOS* FOR INTERPRETING BRAZIL

There would be nothing left for the human race but to bend over the willows of despair, if the abstract metaphysical rhetoric of the Members of Parliament were to be lost forever in

the varnish of the assembly's balustrades, seeping through the cracks in the windows, volatilizing into space like the dust blown by the wind, carrying with it the infertile mentions of Cicero, Socrates and Titus Livius (Prado, 1882, our translation). The [Imperial] Council of State was made up of a small and select number of people (12 councilors, plus a minister and the Emperor). The councilors formed the top of the political elite of the time. They were a homogeneous group of people who did not have before them a diverse and ill-informed audience that needed to be impressed and convinced by the display of erudition. However, the speeches were marked by abundant quotations from foreign authors, as well as many Latin expressions (Carvalho, 2000a, p. 127-128, our translation).

Neither quotation refers to the Proclamation of the Republic. Eduardo Prado and José Murilo de Carvalho discuss what they consider to be one of the main characteristics of the public behavior of Brazil's political and intellectual elites: a preference for flowery, abstract, apparently erudite discourse characterized by references to foreign authorities as an argument of authority, with limited capacity for practical intervention in reality. In 1882, Prado divided his time between studying at the São Paulo Law School and working as a columnist for the newspaper *O Correio Paulistano*, at that time owned by his older brother, Antônio (1840-1929)⁶. In his *Crônicas da Assembleia* [Chronicles of the Assembly], published weekly, the young Eduardo Prado commented on the work routine of São Paulo's parliamentarians, almost always with a critical and ironic tone. In the chronicle published on January 27, 1882, Prado mocked the rhetorical style used by the deputies, which he called

6 Among the Prado brothers, Antônio had the most distinguished political career. From leader of the Conservative Party in São Paulo, Antônio Prato became a deputy, senator, minister of agriculture and managed to survive the Proclamation of the Republic politically, being appointed mayor of São Paulo, a position he held from 1899 to 1911. See: Levi (1977).

'abstract,' 'metaphysical,' overly embellished, and, therefore, incapable of addressing the practical problems that afflicted São Paulo society.

Drawing on Oliveira Vianna's (1883-1951) studies of the Imperial Council of State, José Murilo de Carvalho emphasized how the councilors attempted to impress each other with rhetorical maneuvers adorned with Latin expressions and references to foreign authorities. The concern for practical reality was so peripheral that the same authority was often cited to justify divergent positions. "It could also happen that the quotation was made to sanction a particular discourse which, however, would be abandoned when it came to voting on practical issues" (Carvalho, 2000a, p. 127). For José Murilo de Carvalho, the commitment to rhetorical veneer is such a constitutive feature of Brazilian political history that it should give rise to a specific analytical approach wherein rhetoric would serve as a "key to understanding intellectual history."

Eduardo Prado and José Murilo de Carvalho discuss what they believe to be one of the primary vices of Brazilian social formation, which both authors explore using the category of *bachelorism*. Still in the 1880s, Eduardo Prado traveled to various Latin American countries, recording his impressions in a comprehensive diary that was published in 1884 in a book entitled *The Journeys*. In Uruguay, Prado was greatly discomfited by the behavior of the local military.

There are many generals and a few soldiers, the generals being well-spoken men with a lot of polish, more akin to bachelors than military men. Just the morning we visited the university; we saw them on exercise in a square. The colors of their uniforms were brilliant — red and blue — and the regularity of their maneuvers was perfect. Later, we asked an oriental if the troops were disciplined. After some hesitation, he told us: They maneuver well (Prado, 1884, p. 34-35, our translation).

As I will demonstrate, Prado utilized this argument to assert that the proliferation of *bachelorism* within the Brazilian Army was the principal cause of the indiscipline that precipitated the intervention

on November 15th. More than an indication of an attack on the Republic, the critique of *bachelorism* represents a fundamental aspect of Prado's analysis of the Brazilian social and historical formation. This analysis is characterized by the "incessant search of supposedly enlightened bachelors for distinction within the legal educational institutions, who are incapable of acknowledging the reality of this province and this country," as he articulated in the *Crônicas da Assembleia* published on June 9, 1883 (Prado, 1883). The theme also emerged in the novel *As Façanhas do Russinho* [The Exploits of Russinho], the sole work by Eduardo Prado that has been preserved⁷, which was disseminated in the student newspaper *A Comédia*⁸ in the form of pamphlets between April and May 1881. The narrative concerns Emperor Pedro II's voyage to Paraná and a wealthy English collector's fascination with the Brazilian monarch's umbrella. In pursuit of this object, the English aristocrat employed Russinho, a "mediocre dandy who infiltrated the Emperor's retinue, masquerading as a journalist, a bachelor like many others, with Latin summaries in his mind, but incapable of discerning reality as it is" (Prado, 1881). José Murilo de Carvalho emphasizes this portrayal of the bachelor as a jurist enchanted by linguistic and legal formalism yet unable to grasp reality in his historical analysis.

Since independence, our political elite has been made up predominantly of bachelors. It is the bachelors who make the laws as parliamentarians and apply them as delegates, lawyers and judges. The consequence of this is the conviction that

7 Biographers Candido da Motta Filho and Sebastião Pagano claim that Eduardo Prado also wrote another novel, entitled *Terra Roxa* [Purple Land], but the originals have been lost.

8 A periodical created in 1881 and run by young students from the Faculty of Law of São Paulo who, in the following years, would gain notoriety on the Brazilian political and intellectual scene, such as Raul Pompeia, Afonso Celso and Assis Brasil, it was, in the words of Brito Broca, "a kind of laboratory for writers who would come to prominence in Brazilian literary life at the end of the 19th century" (Broca, 2004, p. 79). With a small circulation, the newspaper ran for just one year, and Eduardo Prado, who in a direct reference to the English Conservative Party signed his texts with the pseudonym *Tory*, was one of its most active editors and writers.

everything can be solved with laws, without concern for the conditions of their application (Carvalho, quoted by Haag, 2005, our translation).

Resulting solely from the imagination of bachelors, laws in Brazil were more rhetorical moves than effective interventions in society's daily life. José Murilo de Carvalho states that the 'bachelor mentality' led Brazilian political elites to believe that "everything can be solved with a new law as if it were enough to legislate on paper for the problem to end in reality. What are the origins of this *bachelorism*, and what problems does it bring? Can this ancestral culture be changed?" Carvalho suggests that *bachelorism* is a factor of backwardness for Brazil because it "represses the sense of circumstance and practical rationality of the ruling elites," who are always driven by the vanity of transforming reality through a legal move. Although he believes that change is necessary, the author is skeptical that this will happen in the short term because the bachelor's vice is entrenched in the roots of the national formation, "whose origins go back a long way," insofar as "our legal system is tributary to the Roman-Germanic tradition of codified law, and not to the tradition of Anglo-Saxon customary law."

Bachelorism also reflected the colonial condition of the Brazilian intelligentsia since, during colonization, education was "controlled by the metropolitan state and the official church, and the creation of universities and colleges in the colony was forbidden, forcing the colonials to seek higher education in the metropolis" (Carvalho, 2000a, p. 126). Criticism of bachelorhood has become a permanent *topos* in Brazilian social thought and can be identified in texts written throughout the 20th century and into the 21st century⁹. José Murilo de Carvalho highlights Oliveira Vianna's reflections on the low circulation of texts by

9 According to Bolívar Lamounier (2007), the criticism of *bachelorism* served as a motto for the creation of an authoritarian intellectual tradition, based on the rejection of the model of the liberal Republic established in 1889. Among these authoritarian pressers were Alberto Torres, Oliveira Viana, Azevedo Amaral (1881-1942) and Francisco Campos (1891-1968).

his master, Alberto Torres (1865-1917). A visceral critic of *bachelorism*, Torres (1908, p. 45) said that bachelors “embroidered a web of abstract or empty discussions over the reality of our lives.” Perhaps because he wanted to differentiate himself from the bachelor style, he rarely quoted foreign authors, which in Brazil was ‘fatal,’ in Oliveira Vianna’s words. With caution, Vianna did not spare references to foreign authorities “to the point of distorting the thought of the cited author in favor of his theses” (Carvalho, 2000a, p. 27).

Manuel Bonfim also criticized “syllogistic politics, bachelorish verbalism, and bookish discourse,” which would lead to “the absence of the spirit of observation, not only in Brazil but throughout Latin America” (Carvalho, 2000a, p. 129), as Eduardo Prado had already identified among the Uruguayan military. Sérgio Buarque de Holanda is another author who highlighted the supposed harm of bachelorhood to the formation of Brazilian society, stating that Brazilians had an exaggerated attachment to “sonorous phrases, spontaneous and abundant verbiage, ostentatious erudition, rare expression,” because among us, “intelligence would rather be an ornament and a gift, not an instrument of knowledge and action” (Holanda, quoted by Carvalho, 2000a, p. 130). Gilberto Freyre also explored the criticism of bachelorhood in his interpretation of Brazil.

The French bachelor or doctor - mulatto or not - brought to Brazilian life a lot of escape from reality through laws that were almost Freudian in their roots or in their true motives. Laws copied from the French and English and in opposition to the Portuguese: revolt of children against country (Freyre, 2004, p. 720, our translation).

Therefore, in the texts of these authors, there is a recurrence of the same association between bachelorhood and “abstract and empty discussion,” with the bachelor being portrayed as a public man who is inept at practical intervention in concrete reality and dazzled by the prestige of classical intellectual authorities. Assuming the existence of intellectual

affinities between different authors inspires us to identify ways of circulating repertoires that are not always conditioned by the cognitive gesture of conscious appropriation (Löwy, 2014). Therefore, the fact that authors as diverse as Sérgio Buarque de Holanda and Gilberto Freyre share a critique of *bachelorism* does not imply that they deliberately sought the formulation in each other or in a common reference.

As Lynch (2010, p. 26) has demonstrated, this occurrence was due to the strength of conservative values in Brazilian political thought, which began to dominate in the mid-19th century. These values were committed to the “so-called realistic or sociological diagnosis of Brazilian society,” which would require the ruling elites to make interventions appropriate to the specificities of the national social and historical situation. Criticism of baccalaureate education, then, would be part of this conservative tradition, alert to the inefficiency of foreign ideas in improving Brazilian institutions and social organization. This theme has become so influential that it has persisted into the 21st century, inspiring Christian Lynch himself in his critique of Brazilian intellectual culture. For Lynch, since the 19th century, Brazilian literati have assimilated colonial values that stipulate qualitative asymmetries, hierarchizing the intellectual work developed by authors located in the center, in relation to that conducted by authors on the periphery of international capitalism. While European and American intellectual products would be qualified as theories of universal value due to their supposedly abstract nature, Brazilian writings would be relegated to the condition of ‘thought,’ whose value would only be circumstantial. This is why Brazilian intellectual elites “have always considered their products to be more or less inferior to those developed in Europe and the United States” (Lynch, 2013, pp. 730-731), which would explain the *bacharelesque* taste for quoting foreign authorities. It was precisely within this repertoire of conservative values that Eduardo Prado and José Murilo de Carvalho conducted their analysis of the first years of the Brazilian Republic. For the authors, the bachelor addiction helped to explain the very advent of the republican regime, especially due to the political performance of Rui Barbosa (1849-1923).

In his telegrams to Europe, Ruy Barbosa behaves like the bachelor par excellence: his easy, fluid, long and monotonous writing tells the European public only what the government wants to be said. [...] For him [Rui Barbosa], everything seems simple, everything he imagines possible. The right to make laws is considered by the illustrious Minister to be a kind of miracle solution to all social and political problems. Dr. Rui Barbosa is already considered in Europe to be a statesman of the Hispanic strain: not very prudent and exaggerated in his saving ambitions (Prado [1890], 2003, p. 16, our translation).

The Proclamation of the Republic significantly altered the relationship between Eduardo Prado and Ruy Barbosa, who had been colleagues at the São Paulo Law School and had previously collaborated on the student newspaper *A Comédia*. News of Ruy Barbosa's appointment to a prominent position in the first republican government was met with "disgust by Eduardo Prado, who began to regard the Bahian jurist as the main bachelor at the service of the Republic" (Mota Filho, 1967, p. 87)¹⁰. For Eduardo Prado, Ruy Barbosa epitomized the arrogance of the republicans, who, with "the stroke of a pen," believed they could solve all the nation's problems. The author characterizes this claim as the "ultimate resolution of all problems" as naive and imprudent. In his criticisms of Ruy Barbosa, Eduardo Prado employs arguments that form the *topos* of *bachelorism* critique: excessively embellished texts, abstract cognition, an inability to address practical reality, and the conviction that everything can be transformed by legislative action. Prado also notes an additional flaw of Ruy Barbosa during his tenure in the Ministry of Finance from late 1889 to early 1891: "the favoritism with

10 The friendly relationship between Eduardo Prado and Rui Barbosa was rekindled after 1893, when the Bahian jurist broke with the Republican Dictatorship and joined the opposition, forcing him to flee Brazil. "With some surprise and unrestrained emotion, Rio Branco and Eduardo Prado were among the few people who welcomed him" (Motta Filho, 1967, p. 88).

which he has been treating all the requests of his friends, at the expense of public interests, while ignoring the dictatorship that oppresses his compatriots" (Prado, 2003 [1890], p. 35).

In contrast to Eduardo Prado, José Murilo de Carvalho was not aggressive in his approach but still placed Ruy Barbosa's work within the context of the Proclamation of the Republic under critical scrutiny. Carvalho points out that Ruy Barbosa was a "last-minute Republican," who claimed to have no fixation on forms of government because modern democracy had transformed parliamentary monarchies into "true crowned republics" (Carvalho, 2011, p. 143). According to Carvalho, the monarchy itself was capable of instituting the necessary changes in Brazil, such as federalism, "which was already on the agenda of prominent liberals such as Joaquim Nabuco and Ruy Barbosa himself" (Carvalho, 2011, p. 143). José Murilo de Carvalho appears to concur with this assessment, suggesting that the institutional rupture sparked on November 15, 1889, was unnecessary and that the monarchy could have modernized the country, particularly regarding the abolition of slavery, the deepening of democracy, and the establishment of federalism. However, "driven by the ambition to have control over the founding legislative acts of the new regime," Ruy Barbosa reportedly joined the republican movement on the eve of November 15, persuaded that an alliance with the military was the cost of the "institutional refoundation of Brazil," because he shared the "Bachelor's conviction" that new laws would have a "demiurgic effect and promote the regeneration of corrupted political and social customs, in the fanciful illusion that customs can be changed by a stroke of law" (Carvalho, 2005, p. 19). As discussed earlier, José Murilo de Carvalho would use the term "coup d'état" again in a 2005 interview, also within the context of his criticism of *bacharelism*.

José Murilo de Carvalho did not limit his criticism to the alleged shortcomings that spurred Rui Barbosa's involvement in political militarism. In an article focusing on the period when the Bahian jurist served as Minister of Economy and Deputy Head of the Provisional Government, José Murilo examined the extensive 'passive correspondence'

directed toward him, which included letters, official documents, and telegrams, with 40% containing requests for favors. At the beginning of his text, Carvalho critiques the bibliography focusing on Rui Barbosa's political career, highlighting its neglect of the jurist's associations with clientelist practices. This neglect, he suggests, might stem from biographers' biases, who feared that revealing such connections might tarnish the idealized image of Barbosa as a statesman, financier, and jurist. José Murilo de Carvalho is decidedly unconcerned with this celebratory portrayal, which often frames Rui Barbosa's public life.

Friendship, family, personal or family need, combined, form the main nucleus of justifications for requests for favors. Many beggars are absolutely convinced that these are sufficient justifications. Conviction is based on two elements. One is the certainty of one's moral obligation to protect family and friends; the other is the notion that it is legitimate to use public resources for private purposes (Carvalho, 2000b, p. 11, our translation).

Carvalho examines this type of request in the context of the category 'statesmanship,' which he has employed in various texts to define what he considers an elementary political defect in Brazil. This defect consists of "the pursuit of political insertion through the state rather than as an affirmation of a citizen's right" (Carvalho, 1990, p. 31). Direct contact with a powerful figure like Rui Barbosa was an attempt to secure privileged access to jobs and other benefits guaranteed by public resources. As Rui Barbosa's replies to the *pidões* [beggars] have not been preserved, José Murilo analyzes the official diary of the republican government and concludes that the minister "was heavily compromised with clientelism," using his influence to grant many of the favors requested. For José Murilo de Carvalho, Rui was the "perfect symbol of the Brazilian doctor," who, in his ministerial actions, "quoted a hundred authors, of which only one was Brazilian, Tavares Bastos" (Carvalho, 2000b, p. 11). Once again, José Murilo de Carvalho associates

Rui Barbosa with the bachelor tradition by emphasizing his reliance on foreign authors, even in operational and administrative documents.

According to Eduardo Prado and José Murilo de Carvalho, the harm caused by *bachelorism* to Brazil was manifold, with the Proclamation of the Republic being the most striking example. The 'bachelor addiction' was not confined to civilian political and intellectual elites but also spread among the military, where it fueled political militarism.

CRITICISM OF POLITICAL MILITARISM

Benjamin Constant (1836-1891) served as a professor of mathematics at the Praia Vermelha Military School starting in 1872. He significantly influenced the 'military youth,' as the students of the institution training Brazilian Army officers were known. During the 1860s, Constant encountered positivist philosophy and became a leading disseminator of Auguste Comte's ideas within the Brazilian military (see Lins, 1967). He advocated for the Republic as the most advanced form of political organization, which he believed would enable the full development of science and the rational planning of society. Constant emerged as a principal leader in the military movement that overthrew the monarchy and subsequently held the position of Minister of War during Deodoro da Fonseca's provisional government. Eduardo Prado accused Constant of fostering indiscipline in the Army, asserting that he indoctrinated young officers and encouraged philosophical debate over martial duties. Prado lamented that the "Brazilian soldier who, in the Paraguayan War, demonstrated consistent bravery" and contributed so much to his homeland—by quelling revolts, upholding national honor, and defending against military tyrannies like those of Rosas and Lopez—had been replaced. This new "type of officer" allegedly focused more on academics, listening to professors, whether bachelors of speech or military men versed in French philosophy, particularly positivism. These instructors allegedly crafted a special rhetorical style in Brazil (Prado, 2003 [1890], p. 25). Prado characterized Benjamin Constant as a typical "bachelor in uniform," primarily responsible for corrupting the Brazilian Army

with political rhetoric: “Benjamin Constant corrupted the intelligence of the youth by teaching them the doctrine that deifies tyranny, known as positivism” (Prado, 1894).

The “pronouncement of November 15” was, according to Prado, a result of the Army’s ‘bachelorization’ led by Benjamin Constant, compounded by the monarchy’s negligence. The failure to instill practical military education left room for a strictly theoretical approach. “D. Pedro II himself,” Prado noted, “so engaged in the sciences, did nothing more than confer a bachelor’s degree upon the army officer, who now naturally exhibits a pronounced political, discursive, and demonstrative zeal” (Prado, 2003 [1890], 26). Prado had already criticized the monarch’s lenient treatment of republican opposition. However, regarding the military, he escalated his critique, aligning with those who, in the years leading to the monarchy’s end, mocked the emperor—ironizing his fascination with astrology, history, and classical literature, and portraying him as an old man deluded about his surroundings (Schwarcz, 1998).

On November 18, 1899, Eduardo Prado published the article *Traição à Pátria* [Betrayal of the Homeland] in the newspaper *Comércio de São Paulo*. Three days after the Brazilian Republic’s first decade, he evaluated Benjamin Constant’s role in the political and military plot culminating on November 15th. Prado considered Constant a symbol of ‘perfidy,’ exploiting ‘the hospitality, trust, and naivety of His Majesty to conspire against the Monarchy while enjoying the royal family’s intimacy’ (Prado, 1899). Here, Prado referred to Constant’s period teaching Pedro II’s grandchildren between 1878 and 1881, a time when Constant was a respected Military School professor and a public advocate of positivism. As discussed earlier in this article, this aspect is also detailed in José Murilo de Carvalho’s biography of Pedro II, exemplifying the perceived tolerance of republican opposition during the Second Reign. Both authors suggest that the military movement establishing the Republic resulted from Benjamin Constant’s positivist advocacy within the Army, right under Emperor Pedro II’s watch.

The military school, especially after the arrival of positivism, became a center for the study of mathematics, philosophy and literature, rather than military subjects. The positivist influence intensified after Benjamin Constant joined the teaching staff in 1872. Testimonies from former students and the content of the journals published by the students reveal the predominance of an environment far removed from what might have been expected in an institution designed to prepare war technicians (Carvalho, 2005, p. 24-25, our translation).

Following Eduardo Prado's lead, José Murilo de Carvalho associates the influence of positivism with the politicization of the Army and, consequently, with the military intervention that led to the Republic's proclamation. Carvalho also highlights the detrimental impact of *bachelorism* on Brazilian barracks in the late 19th century, suggesting that after Benjamin Constant joined the Praia Vermelha Military School faculty, the institution began producing 'bachelors in uniform' to rival those 'without uniforms' from law schools. These officers preferred to be addressed as doctors within the army, with titles such as 'Dr. General,' 'Dr. Lieutenant,' or simply 'Dr.' This milieu fostered acceptance of the soldier-citizen idea, which has influenced the ideology of military interventions in Brazil since the Republic's proclamation (Carvalho, 2005, p. 24-25). Prado had employed identical terminology in his article, *Traição à Pátria*, stating that 'the apostle of Comte's religion introduced the soldier-citizen principle to the barracks, allowing officers to defy the throne they swore to defend' (Prado, 1899).

José Murilo de Carvalho regards Benjamin Constant as the "mentor of the Republic, catechist, apostle, evangelist, doctrinaire, intellectual leader, preceptor, teacher, and idol of military youth" (Carvalho, 2005, p. 29). Carvalho examines Constant's work using nearly the same vocabulary as Eduardo Prado used in the late 19th century, highlighting the military officer's doctrinal work and his links, defined as religious, with positivist philosophy. In their criticism of Benjamin Constant and

the “bachelors in uniform”, both Eduardo Prado and José Murilo de Carvalho critique Benjamin Constant and the ‘bachelors in uniform’ within the framework of modern military culture that stipulates a central premise: the armed forces should be part of the state bureaucracy, consisting of war technicians obedient to legitimate authorities. In this modern concept of the armed forces, soldiers are not seen as citizens for whom political and military activities are essential to citizenship—a notion prevalent in classical antiquity (Aristóteles, 1991). The modern military is focused on defending national sovereignty from foreign threats, making foreign invasion risks necessitate unconditional obedience to domestic authorities, as confronting invaders requires a politically stable and orderly internal environment (Forest, 1990, p. 29).

Eduardo Prado explicitly advocated for this modern military organization in 1893, in his book *A Ilusão Americana*. His thesis refuted the U.S. foreign policy argument positing unity among American nations, urging severed ties with Europe. Prado perceived this as a fallacy to justify U.S. domination over Latin America. To challenge this supposed American unity, he referenced the 1879-1883 war between Chile and Peru, where “a small Chilean army, bolstered by volunteers,” faced a large Peruvian army “demoralized by political interventions, disorganized by pronouncements, and tarnished by betrayal and deceit—typical of any army engaged in politics” (Prado, 1980 [1893], p. 86). For Prado, the war’s outcome, a Chilean victory, “made possible by a professional and disciplined army” (Prado, 1980 [1893], p. 87).

Regarding the relationship between the military and politics in Brazil during the transition from the monarchy to the Republic, the Pradian/Carvalhian paradigm was notably influential in specialized historiography. Celso Castro, for example, noted that with the exception of Deodoro da Fonseca, “the officers who actively participated in the republican coup were primarily young officers of lower ranks,” mostly military personnel from the so-called “scientific corps” of the Army (Castro, 1995, pp. 8-9). Vitor Izecksohn (1997) and Renato Lemos (2009) highlight that the Paraguayan War was crucial in developing the Brazilian Army’s “esprit de corps,” as its dynamics impacted the

soldiers who participated as officers, emerging with a specific discourse on the nation (Izecksohn, 1997, p. 80). In this context, the camaraderie forged in the Paraguayan camps, according to the authors, strengthened the armed forces' group feeling, motivating army officers' participation in the political crisis primarily through corporatist sentiments. Renato Lemos credits Eduardo Prado's observations with an empirical dimension, noting that from the 1880s onward, the Brazilian military's politicization process intensified. Lemos points out that in the 1881 elections, two soldiers campaigned for seats in the Chamber of Deputies. Although military participation in elections was not new—figures such as Luís Alves de Lima e Silva, the Duke of Caxias (1803-1880), and Manoel Luís Osório, the Marquis of Herval (1808-1879), had been involved in legislative roles since the early 19th century—the military activism of the 1880s was distinct. At issue was not the political behavior of an officer aligned with the monarchy's aristocratic values but the military's attempt to represent corporate interests within formal politics.

The 1881 military candidates' electoral campaign carried a "corporate background," blaming civilian politicians for "issues such as uncertain payment of salaries and pensions, low salary value, slow promotions, and the lack of a compulsory retirement law that would open vacancies for young officers." The candidates also criticized the failure to fulfill promises of prioritizing Paraguayan War veterans for civil service roles and the poor living conditions within the service (Lemos, 2009, p. 420). Even though the two military candidates were defeated, their candidacies indicated a new profile of the Army's political behavior, characterized by the intent for institutional political intervention, culminating in the republican coup of November 1889. American historian Frank McCam (2007, p. 29) also identified the growing politicization of the army in the 1880s, echoing Eduardo Prado's argument about military education, which "clearly diverged from developing a professional force," with military school graduates being "immersed in a curriculum focused more on the humanities and theoretical science than on practical military arts." Eduardo Prado not only highlighted the military's politicization before the Republic's Proclamation but was also

committed to denouncing the military dictatorship that solidified the new regime in the early 1890s, leading to his political persecution. His political activism during this period was guided by the argument that political freedom is incompatible with military power.

There are no two opinions in the civilized world about the clamorous immorality of political militarism. We could quote a hundred passages in which the military writers of cultured countries teach what is already in every conscience, namely that the duty of unconditional obedience and the natural mission of the army forbid the citizen armed by the nation any intervention in politics (Prado, 2003 [1890], p. 112, our translation).

The dichotomy between tyranny and freedom is frequently invoked in Eduardo Prado's political critique. It serves as a criterion to categorize political regimes as either 'civilized' or 'barbaric.' The Brazilian Republic is distinctly classified as a 'tyranny,' primarily because it was established on the foundation of political militarism, with armed citizens permitted to participate in political processes. According to Eduardo Prado, political freedom presupposes that social disputes over power should be conducted without resorting to weapons, relying solely on arguments..

The only weapon that civilization admits in the political struggle should be logic, because as soon as someone considers themselves legitimate to wield the sabre to enforce their will, freedom gives way to tyranny and that is exactly what the Brazilian Republic is doing, which is nothing like a Republic (Prado, 2003 [1890], p. 113, our translation).

Eduardo Prado utilizes the Aristotelian concept of the 'Republic' to define this form of government as transcending the mere institutional organization of a political regime. In this context, 'Republic' signifies the

‘empire of freedom, ensuring that all citizens live in a state of liberty, which is the exact opposite of tyranny’ (Aristóteles, 1993, p. 24). According to Prado, a Republican Dictatorship constitutes a tyranny because ‘from its very inception, it begins by condemning the passive obedience of the soldier. It starts by undermining the foundation of all military organization, as it is either passive, or it ceases to be obedience. No general with proven patriotism on the battlefield has ever endeavored to attain political positions’ (Prado, 2003 [1890], p. 109-110). Therefore, the Brazilian Republic emerged tainted by the vice of political militarism, characterized by the military’s ambition to occupy political positions, which Prado deemed incompatible with political virtue. Without the ‘passive obedience’ of the military, establishing a regime of freedoms would be unattainable. The author was skeptical about the potential for Republic regeneration.

Prado died in 1901, witnessing the civilian oligarchies ascend to the Presidency of the Republic in 1894, with Prudente de Moraes’s inauguration. However, he remained doubtful that the era of ‘military pronouncements’ had concluded, arguing that “regimes born corrupt do not become virtuous; the germ of militarism will accompany the Republic as long as it exists” (Prado, 2003 [1890], p. 73). José Murilo de Carvalho, born 38 years after Prado’s death, had the opportunity to observe and analyze a more extensive period of Brazilian republican history, seemingly validating Prado’s predictions.

In his book *As Forças Armadas na Primeira República: O Poder Destabilizador* [The Armed Forces in the First Republic: Destabilizing Power], published in 2005, José Murilo de Carvalho demonstrates that the militarization of the Republic did not cease with the end of the military dictatorship and Prudente de Moraes’s inauguration, as the civilian elites had hoped. Marked by two military interventions, the history of the First Brazilian Republic was permeated by political militarism from start to finish (Carvalho, 2005, p. 3). The two pivotal events are the uprising of November 15, 1889, and what is known as the ‘Revolution of 1930.’ Between these events, Carvalho cites examples of military-induced political instability: from the Vaccine Revolt in 1904 to the rebellion led by Getúlio Vargas in 1930, including Hermes da

Fonseca's presidential campaign in 1910 and the tenentismo movement in the 1920s. Essentially, "the military never exited the political arena until the 1980s" (Carvalho, 2005, p. 8). The end of the dictatorship and redemocratization in the 1980s were, therefore, anticipated to finally demilitarize the Republic by politically restraining the military. However, recent Brazilian political history indicates otherwise, as from the 2010s onwards, the Brazilian Republic was again destabilized by military influences, a development closely monitored by José Murilo de Carvalho.

In October 2015, José Murilo published an article titled *Luz Amarela* [Yellow Light] in the newspaper *O Globo*, analyzing a statement by Hamilton Mourão, then a general in the Brazilian Army and head of the Southern Military Command, made during the Soldier's Day celebrations on August 25 of that year. In Porto Alegre, Mourão addressed the troops and declared that there were still "many internal enemies" in Brazil; however, he assured that the military was "not unprepared." "Let them come," challenged the general (Mourão, as cited by Mariz, 2015). A few days later, Mourão made headlines again by encouraging members of the Military Club to honor Colonel Carlos Alberto Brilhante Ustra, former head of the military dictatorship's repressive body, who had recently passed away. On September 17, during a lecture in Rio Grande do Sul, Mourão expressed support for the impeachment of Dilma Rousseff, which was starting to gain traction in national political discourse. According to the general, Rousseff's departure would not significantly alter the country's political landscape, but the "advantage of change would be the elimination of incompetence, mismanagement, and corruption" (Mourão, as cited by Mariz, 2015). Mourão's actions drew displeasure from the Ministry of Defense, resulting in his removal from command of the southern military region and subsequent transfer to the reserve. Nevertheless, the exposure he gained enabled him to amass sufficient political capital to form the successful presidential ticket in the 2018 elections alongside Jair Bolsonaro. Faced with the institutional crisis that began in June 2013 and which, at that time, raised the possibility of the impeachment of the head of the executive branch, Carvalho assessed that Mourão's statements had two meanings: the first "turned on

a 'yellow light' for Brazilian democracy, as it marked a watershed for the Republic, interrupting a period of almost 30 years of political containment by the military." The second meaning was the "germination of the seed that has corrupted the Brazilian republic since its inception." This seed, this "original evil, was precisely political militarism, which had lain dormant for some time and was now returning to reveal what would be the main challenge in Brazilian republican history" (Carvalho, 2015). At the end of the article, José Murilo bluntly stated: "The armed forces are not democratic." Six years later, under the Bolsonaro administration, Carvalho returned to the subject, again in the newspaper *O Globo*, now in an interview with journalist Sérgio Roxo on August 11, 2021. The day before, the Navy held a military exercise in Brasília, near the Three Powers Square, which many interpreted as a provocation. José Murilo de Carvalho believed that a military coup in favor of then-president Jair Bolsonaro would not occur, as this would require the support of the commanders of the three forces, which, in his opinion, was lacking. However, he stated that "troops surrounding Congress are a bad omen, as it references the virus that has weakened the Brazilian Republic since 1889" (Carvalho, as quoted by Roxo, 2021).

"Germ," "virus," "corrupting seed." The vocabulary shared by Eduardo Prado and José Murilo de Carvalho to approach political militarism suggests the image of the Brazilian Republic as an organism that, from birth, was affected by a chronic disease. Even if, for some time, the pathology remained asymptomatic, it has never ceased to exist. It could manifest again at any time because its causative agent was alive, incubating somewhere. According to the diagnosis of both authors, the Republic of Brazil has never been healthy.

CONCLUSION: PRUDENCE AND MONARCHY AS SYMBOLS OF STABILITY

Returning to the conference that José Murilo de Carvalho held at the end of 2007, dedicated to the social and political thought of Eduardo Prado. After the presentation, addressing his academic peers at the ABL,

José Murilo defined Eduardo Prado as “the prudent conservative who understood how promises of radical change often lead to disappointments and frustrations, if not regressions, further demonstrating his relevance” (Carvalho, 2008, p. 87). Eduardo Prado’s prudence underscores his relevance, teaching us to be cautious with promises of disruption. José Murilo de Carvalho himself appears to have drawn inspiration from prudence in his reflections on Brazilian democracy. In a 2005 interview with journalist Carlos Haag, Carvalho was questioned about his proposals for improving political citizenship in Brazil. While his initial inclination was to suggest that representative democracy had failed and that alternatives should be sought, he admitted that he refrained from pursuing such ideas, recognizing “because deep down I was not sure whether the model itself was flawed or if it had not been given adequate time to be properly implemented. Remember that it took centuries for democracy to become established in the West” (Carvalho, quoted by Haag, 2005). José Murilo de Carvalho proposes that the issues surrounding the fragility of political citizenship in Brazil may relate to the youth of its democracy, which has yet to mature and achieve the institutional level of its European counterparts. Hence, “perhaps it would be more effective to make specific adjustments rather than attempt radical changes” (Carvalho, quoted by Haag, 2005).

José Murilo de Carvalho’s words reflect Karl Mannheim’s “conservative mentality,” characterized by skepticism towards revolutionary promises and the belief that necessary changes should occur gradually. This conservative perspective on time favors “incremental transformations capable of improving social organization as far as possible, without being seduced by the utopian allure of progressive ideas” (Mannheim, 1987, p. 72). Writing amid the events of November 1889, Eduardo Prado questioned the “sudden transformation that violently interrupted the prudent progress the Monarchy was making towards addressing the needs of the approaching new century” (Prado, 2003 [1890], p. 32). Prado argued that the necessary changes demanded by the 20th century—such as the abolition of slavery, industrialization, and federalism—were already being prudently implemented by the monarchy. This

moderate and measured pace of transformation was disrupted by the “pronouncement of November 15th,” orchestrated by those “driven by the arrogance that everything can be resolved overnight,” leading to the undoing of more than 60 years of history (Prado, 2003 [1890], p. 33).

Eduardo Prado and José Murilo de Carvalho valued prudence in political matters, sharing the “conservative mentality” Mannheim discusses. Both believed that the social and political transformations necessary for Brazil's modernization had been underway since the 1870s and that the barracks intervention of November 15 only impeded this process. The military coup that proclaimed the Republic, marked by abrupt rupture, became the focus of Eduardo Prado's attempts at restoration and José Murilo de Carvalho's continual critical monitoring.

Paulo José Pires Brandão recalls visiting José do Patrocínio (1853-1905) at the newsroom of the newspaper *A Cidade do Rio*, with Eduardo Prado. Their host enthusiastically showed them his new invention: a balloon drawn in chalk on the floor. Upon departure, the abolitionist advised Prado, “Son, let go of this idea of monarchy. Brazil needs your talents.” Prado reportedly replied, staring at the drawing of the balloon, “Monarchy is my balloon” (Broca, 1983, p. 109).

José Murilo de Carvalho also received a caution regarding the monarchy from a friend. During the 1993 plebiscite, when Brazilians were asked to choose the political regime and form of government, Carvalho was among the few intellectuals who publicly defended the monarchy. Simon Schwartzman reportedly inquired, “why defend the Monarchy, Zé?” Carvalho replied, “because someone has to” (Schwartzman, 2023). Years later, in an interview with Lúcia Lippi Oliveira, Marieta de Moraes Ferreira, and Celso Castro, Carvalho lamented that he was never forgiven by “some sectors” due to his stance in the plebiscite and sought to clarify his position. He stated that he did not “intend to champion the Monarchy” and was not “being a monarchist” when he spoke out. He merely believed that “from an institutional and political viewpoint, there were lessons to be learned from the period of the Empire,” particularly the Moderator Power, “capable of arbitrating

conflicts among the elites and ensuring national stability” (Carvalho, quoted by Castro; Ferreira; Oliveira, 1998, p. 270).

My aim in this article was not solely to establish a bibliographical comparison between Eduardo Prado and José Murilo de Carvalho, highlighting converging points in their interpretations of the historical process. Rather, I intended to demonstrate that Prado and Carvalho share a critical and analytical vocabulary that forms a specific tradition, not just in historiography focused on the First Republic, but also within Brazilian social thought.

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