

# *Libro de Mano: 'A Political and Sentimental Account', a manuscript pamphlet*

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## RESUMO

Neste artigo as autoras analisam um documento depositado na seção de manuscritos da Biblioteca Nacional no Rio de Janeiro, na pasta de “jornais manuscritos”, intitulado “*Novella política e sentimental*”; *descrição de factos dos tempos da Revolução e Campanha Oriental e da Colônia de Sacramento 1810-1823*. Não consta a autoria, tampouco a data de produção do documento. O texto tem 51 páginas manuscritas e é dividido em três partes, e pressupomos que seja material de propaganda política em favor da monarquia espanhola. Este artigo destaca, inicialmente, em que medida os panfletos manuscritos serviram às elites coloniais para a mobilização política das camadas populares iletradas. O ponto central é a análise da narrativa novelesca, no sentido de perceber os elementos discursivos utilizados como persuasão em defesa da Espanha.

Palavras-chave: jornais manuscritos; monarquia espanhola; propaganda política.

## ABSTRACT

In this article the authors analyze a document held in the manuscript section of the National Library of Rio de Janeiro, in the manuscript newspapers file, entitled ‘*A Political and Account*’, *a description of the facts of the Revolution and the Eastern Campaign and that of the Colony of Sacramento 1810-1823*. There is neither reference to the author nor to the date of its composition. The text has 51 manuscript pages and is divided into three parts. Our point of departure is the supposition that the *Political and Sentimental Account* is political propaganda on behalf of the Spanish monarchy. Initially highlighted is how pamphlet manuscripts served colonial elites to politically mobilize the illiterate masses. The central point of the article is the analysis of its novel-like narrative in order to show how the discursive elements were used as persuasion in defense of Spain.

Keywords: manuscript newspapers; Spanish monarchy; political propaganda.

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## ‘MANUSCRIPT NEWSPAPERS’

The presence of manuscripts in the cultural life of the Iberian Peninsula in the eighteenth century is well known in the relevant historiography, as since the end of the nineteenth century studies have highlighted the existence of regularly published eighteenth century manuscript pamphlets. The manuscript texts, some of which are authentic *libros de mano*, were considered to be works which had a restricted scope, since it was believed that on printed texts achieved a wide circulation. The best known manuscripts are epistolaries, poetry and meditations, amongst other texts that are part of a limited sociability. However, in addition to these types of writing, various libraries have sets of manuscript documents classified as ‘manuscript newspapers.’ The Spanish historian Fernando Bouza noted the presence of manuscripts with social or political satires, or criticisms of the government, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the Iberian Peninsula.

The spread of this phenomenon in public places was enormous and by sharing a common substratum with social and political satire (forms of publication and authorship, metrics, etc.), they allow us to encounter the primeval social practice on which the pamphlets and other criticisms of the government were based, which were also mostly manuscripts.<sup>2</sup>

It is also possible to find the permanence of this type of libel in Spanish American at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Boleslao Lewin, in an article about the “Conspiracy of the French in Buenos Aires” (1795), reports a statement that allows the manner in which these critical, and often defamatory, pamphlets circulated to be reconstructed in detail:

Fr. Igarzábal, from the order of Our Lady of Mercedes, having heard about a certain person who lived near his convent, finding himself at night with his house window open, and about to go to bed, noticed that someone wearing a cloak was going along the road toward one of the street corners, where he stayed for some time making noise with paper; wishing to know what it could be, he decided to go out, and following him, found stuck up in the corner a handbill with recent news which he took down; continuing onwards he saw other handbills, which he collected, up to six or seven in number; keeping an eye on the man, he decided to make contact with him, and following his steps until he saw him going into his house, therefore getting clear that it was the same men he had presumed; straight afterwards he left and looking at the pamphlets noticed

that they were hurtful to the Majesties, and that in them the events in France were praised.<sup>3</sup>

With the arrival of the Portuguese Court in Rio de Janeiro and the crisis generated by the Napoleonic invasion of the Iberian Peninsula, satirical pamphlets circulated heating up the political contestation orchestrated by the opposition which was divided between support for Napoleon and criticism of the king for abandoning Portugal. In the reports of the intendent of the Police of Rio de Janeiro, Paulo Fernandes Viana, can be found a note about pamphlets stuck up in Rua do Fogo, praising Napoleon Bonaparte:

*The Intendent in Andrahi  
And El Rei in Santa Cruz  
Only you, the Great Bonaparte  
Who was born to reign  
And the due measures the former  
Is in Santa Helena imprisoned!!*<sup>4</sup>

It is important to highlight that manuscript texts were a very important means of propagating ideas and questioning colonial society during the first two decades of the nineteenth century. During the second half of the eighteenth century the offenses and calumnies exchanged in Spanish America between those who were 'enlightened' or 'Frenchified' and their 'royalist' or 'legalist' oppositions created a 'war of pamphlets,' with of homemade papers and different types of calligraphy. However, it was only after the French invasion of the Iberian Peninsula and the vacuum of power in Spain that these 'pamphlets' and their verses, ballads and dialogues spread through the various provinces launching new ideas or coming out in defense of the *Ancien Regime*. In Brazil this gathered momentum in 1821, when the supporters of constitutionalism emerged victorious from the February rebellion in Rio de Janeiro, and a new political culture germinated based on handwritten pamphlets, which spread through the city clandestinely defending and demanding the publication of a Constitution. Kirsten Shults states that although the impact of these pamphlets was limited – since they only affected those who knew how to read, a minority among the residents in the city –, the political impact was significant, since the 'pamphlets' were read clandestinely.

According to reports of the intendent's informants, in inns, pharmacies and other locations for public and private meetings, the residents of Rio

“listened to recitations or participated in conversations about messages and the meaning of constitutionalist works.”<sup>5</sup>

In this context of intense political disputes, the manuscript periodicals served as a stage for the conflicts and disputes that expanded through political scandals and calumnies. The pamphlets were spaces in which political and personal debates and discussions were held, as well as containing various news reports.

The manuscript material coexisted with printed material, rare at the beginning of the nineteenth century, since printing presses were still not common in Iberian American and the price of paper was high. In addition, the censorship of the press in advance prevented the production of material critical of the government.<sup>6</sup> Another advantage of the manuscripts was the possibility of modifying the text, something which could not occur with printed material. Bouza seeks to show that because of the prior censorship of printed material, manuscripts were an option, since only after entering into circulation could they be censored.

Without a doubt, even though, as we will see, ecclesiastical or royal vigilance could also be extended to the circulation of manuscripts, official controls were above all aimed at the diffusion of printed texts through the prior censorship of what was sent to printing presses. This, thus, opened a certain space for the transmission of compromised material through the resort to handwritten material, whose initial circulation could not be prevented in advance, though it could be done afterwards through the seizure or the coerced surrender of copies owned by individuals. (Bouza, 2001, p.63)

Recent studies on books and readings have registered a gradual transformation of the analysis of manuscript pamphlets based on the epistemological guidelines of a cultural history of communication and have permitted some observations to be made about the circularity of these papers and the cultural policies of the period in which they were written.

In the National Library of Rio de Janeiro an inventory drawn up by Waldir da Cunha classifies a set of manuscripts under the title of ‘periodical manuscripts.’<sup>7</sup> The ‘newspapers’ that are part of this inventory circulated in Rio de Janeiro between 1741 and 1903. The documents were classified as such for two reasons: (1) for being manuscripts, and (2) due to their content. The themes encountered covered political issues, news and entertainment – poetry, stories, jokes, charades, etc. The space destined to the cultural and social

chronicles is very large in relation to other sections. These chronicles in general mocked daily life, discussing relationships between men and women, the role of women, the attitudes of young people from wealthy families, as well as relationships and behavior present in society. The news varied from reports about religious festivals to the increase of the canine population in the city.

The 'periodical manuscripts' encountered in the National Library are in an *in quarto* format, with a small number of pages and titles and epigraphs that are often curious. In general the owner of the periodical was also the editor. Although they were classified as periodicals, they were not produced regularly. Some were distributed freely, others sold, while others must have been returned to the editor. This set of manuscripts comes from private collections and their preservation has encountered great difficulty, since they circulated intensely in the country, with many being stuck up in public places - an important factor in explaining their bad condition and the scarcity of these periodicals. The reading in public of these pamphlets was very common, since the number of literate people at the time was still very small.

In relation to authorship, Bouza notes that in this type of manuscript

the figure of the author has been losing his profile as the all powerful creator who dominated the text in an absolute form. The beneficiaries of his partial 'blurring' were both printers and editors, who it must be recognized had increasingly greater participation in the works with which they were concerned, and also the readers themselves, now seen as something more than mere receptors of the ideas proposed to them by an omnipotent author, modifying the classical idea of reading to a form of active representation rather than passive reception. Thus, the manuscript copy is revealed as a form of transmission in which it is possible to recognize various hands and thus more than one author. (Bouza, 2001, p.21)

Similar information is given by Tiago C. P. dos Reis Miranda in an article on a manuscript encountered in Ajuda Library (Portugal), entitled "Diary of the year of 1731 and the deeds of the Conde de Ericeira, D. Francisco Xavier de Menezes ...". Reading the title leave no doubt about the identity of the author. Nevertheless, Reis Miranda states that various studies have questioned the authorship of the 'Diary,' including the historian Jaime Cortesão who in his work on the Treaty of Madrid (1750) suggests that various copies of the 'Diary of the Conde' had been sent by the latter to his friends."<sup>8</sup> In the same article, Reis Miranda, referring to manuscript gazettes in the collection of Évora Library, emphasized that there existed at least three candidates to

assume the authorship of the gazettes.” This is thus a further problem to resolve in relation to the analysis of ‘manuscript newspapers.’

The principal objective of this work is to evaluate to what extent these pamphlets served the colonial elites for the political mobilization of the illiterate groups. Assuming that the participation of popular segments of socio-political movements occurs through the identification of the population with concrete proposals linked to their own interests and anxieties, the vision that the alliances between the elites and the popular sectors simply occurred through charismatic leadership and/or paternalistic connections becomes too simplistic. Corroborating this line of thought, the historian Kirsten Schultz notes that “in the context of the constitutionalist movement, obtaining a comprehension of public opinion and reforming this opinion in favor of the Crown acquired a new urgency...” (Shultz, 2008, p.364). Thus, our project proposes to analyze the forms and discourses used in manuscript political propaganda in order to form public opinion in a determined political segment.

#### “A POLITICAL AND SENTIMENTAL ACCOUNT”

The principal source used to write this text was a manuscript found in the National Library of Rio de Janeiro entitled ‘A Political and Sentimental Account.’ The choice of this material as the object of study was due to its originality and the particularities of the document understood here as a piece of political propaganda.

The document in question is deposited in the manuscripts section of the National Library (BN I-28, 24, 9), in the ‘manuscript newspapers’ folder, placed there – according to Waldir da Cunha, who is responsible for the cataloguing – due to its similarity with other documents. The description of the document reads: ‘*A Political and Sentimental Account*’; a description of the facts of the Revolution and the Eastern Campaign and that of the Colony of Sacramento 1810-1823. Coleção Martin. There is no reference to authorship, nor to the date the text was produced.

‘*A Political and Sentimental Account*’ is divided into three parts, with a total of 51 manuscript pages and covers the 1810-1823 period. Six principal characters were involved. They are: 1) *the narrator*: a Spanish trader who has left Spain because of the Napoleonic invasion; 2) *Costa*: a native of Lisbon, single and private secretary of the commander of the Portuguese army in Montevideo; 3) *Dias*: A Spanish friend of the narrator, married, father of two daughters who live in Montevideo and who, with the worsening of the

revolution, has joined the royal army; 4) *Mr. Archs*: an English plantation owner living in Rio de Janeiro, father Ramona and a boy who studies in England; 5) *Ramona*: daughter of Archs and lover of Costa; 6) *Silva*: a Portuguese friend of the narrator. As well as these characters the narrative also involves two Peruvian deputies: one of whom is a coronel and the other a captain of artillery; a liberal Spanish liberal expatriate living in London; a Spanish canon, also an expatriate due to his opposition to the liberal cause and also living in London.

The plot includes a set of elements that identify the purpose of the document, which is to defend the Spanish monarchy and to criticize constitutionalism. The political scenario of the epoch sustained the argumentation. Following chronological order, the report starts with the impact of Napoleonic expansion in Spain, which caused many Spanish to flee to America. It continues with the crisis caused by the Revolution in Buenos Aires and the presence of the Portuguese army on the outskirts of Montevideo. The final part of the account takes place in Brazil, where the characters witness the constitutionalist movements in Rio de Janeiro and in Salvador and are obliged to flee to London, the place of refuge for the different political currents that were part of the ideological confrontation of the time. The roles played by the different characters are a synthesis of the elements and the ideas that compose a colonial society in conflict.

Using this set of actors an account was constructed in which the romance between Ramona and Costa served only as a backdrop to the politics. It functions as an element that triggers emotions, revitalizing and dramatizing the narrative. The text with its simple and direct language is presented with markings similar to a play, thereby losing the elegant style and rhythm of the 'novelesque' narrative of the time.

## **First part**

The 'Account' begins with the departure of the narrator, a Spanish trader, from Cadiz heading to Montevideo, due to the Napoleonic expansion in Spain. The imprisonment of the Spanish royal family in 1808 by Napoleon Bonaparte, and the ascension of Joseph Bonaparte as king in the place of Fernando VII, caused popular revolt and consequently unchained violent reaction on the part of the French troops who were on Iberian soil. Following the successive victories of the Napoleonic army, total control of Spanish territory by the French was seen as very likely. In this context, many supporters of the Bourbon

monarchy, and in particular the supporters of the king, Fernando VII, left Spain.

The arrival of the Spaniard in the vice-royalty of Rio da Prata coincided with the outbreak of the Revolution of May 1810, which led to the independence of the region, and the invasion of the Banda Oriental by Portuguese troops. After the arrival of D. João in Rio de Janeiro the project of the expansion of the Portuguese Empire to the River Platte became the priority of the Cabinet. With the worsening of the crisis in Buenos Aires Spain resolved to replace the Viceroy of do Rio da Prata, Balthazar Hidalgo de Cisneros, with the governor of Montevideo, Francisco Javier Élio, a loyal ally of the Spanish monarchy, making the city of Montevideo a refuge for Spanish persecuted in Buenos Aires and a redoubt of loyalist resistance. Due to the threat of the revolutionaries to the city, Javier Élio asked the Court of Brazil for assistance, whose troops, commanded by D. Diogo de Souza Coutinho, were already encamped in Rio Grande, on the border with the Banda Oriental.

Actually the May Revolution in Buenos Aires shook the capital of the former viceroyalty and triggered its downfall. Paraguay declared itself independent of Buenos Aires, while those from the Banda Oriental remained loyal to the captive king, reneging an association with the United Provinces. In response Buenos Aires sent a general, Artigas,<sup>9</sup> to recover its supposed dominion, but this met the resistance of the governor, Francisco Javier Elio,<sup>10</sup> who had requested assistance from the Portuguese army.<sup>11</sup>

The encounter of the narrator with an officer from the Portuguese army, Costa, serves as an argument for the criticism of the Lusitanian policy for the region. Commenting on the arrival of the Portuguese troops, the narrator notes: “who after a suspicious march finally arrived at S. Jose a village twenty leagues from Montevideo, in whose port they encamped.” The suspicion of Portuguese policy grew with the maneuvers carried out by the Portuguese commander: “news of the march of D. Diogo, and other secret reports, made Viceroy Élio completely suspicious, and he soon after made an armistice with Buenos Aires ... Those from Buenos Aires in compliance with the agreement, not because of the Viceroy, but out of fear from the Portuguese Army which was in sight.” The narrator also emphasizes that the presence of the Portuguese army in São José attracted the attention of its inhabitants who said they had seen there “an army that have more pieces [of artillery] than soldiers.”

The appearance of Costa takes place when the Spanish trader, after leaving the encampment of the Portuguese army, “sees a man sitting on tree trunk reading a book.” A conversation starts between the two, which ends with the



Spaniard inviting Costa to come with him to visit Montevideo. During the trip the narrator praises the quality of life in the colonial society and the advantages of living under the rule of the Spanish monarchy, highlighting the woes that war has brought to those provinces.

On the road to Montevideo they pass through a village called Piedras, and the narrator describes the battle of Las Piedras:

Seven months ago, I tell you, in this same place, the famous battle of the Pedras took place, here my Compatriots paid the first tribute to their loyalty and adhesion to Spain, here began a cause that after many years will perhaps see the interests, Laws and appearance of some Nations.<sup>12</sup>

A third character – Sr. Dias – is introduced when the travelers passing through a province meet a friend of the narrator, a rich trader, who offers them the hospitality of his house. The dinner offered and the lifestyle of the Dias family is offered as a metaphor of the culture and wealth of colonial society.

Dias told us that while the Dinner was being served, we could go to the parlor to listen to his daughters sing and play; we did that and without repugnance one of them started to play the most celebrated variations of Mozart... After this the Girl sang and played some passages from the Opera 'Gasa Ladra' (Thieving Magpie) by Rossini, and that passage particularly pleased Senhor Costa when the magpie going to die gives his human companion a present. The girl got up, sat at the other side of the piano and played and sang that passage from Tancredi's piece – Tanti-parpita –, and the final Aria of the Turk in Italy which gives rise to it, – he is blamed.

As a member of the colonial elite, the host insisted on demonstrating the erudition of his daughters and their knowledge of the classics of European music. During the dinner plenty of food was served, with various plates and wine from the island of Madeira and from Greece. Although in this region slaves were not common, the richest families insisted on their presence for domestic service. These scenes, in an exemplary fashion, reinforce the way of living of this society in which almost nothing is different from European societies, the model of civilization. The conclusion that is reached is that the metropole allows the colonists to enjoy a quality of life similar to the Spanish in the peninsula.

After dinner, the women went to their rooms and the men remained talking about politics. The various speeches praised colonial daily life,

emphasizing the existence there of liberty and justice, a fact that surprises the Portuguese, who in the text represents a slaveholding society, with restricted liberty, in which the colonial system did not produce academic and cultural units, unlike what happened in the Spanish colonies.

Dias took a large sip of *Chiprence*, and started in this manner ... Sr. Costa may perhaps be surprised if I assure him that the Spanish Americans are the freest of men. I am not speaking about the liberty known in some parts of Europe, which in my understanding, is liberty of a class, and for this reason only reaches a small number of people ... In these countries there is an equality of limits because no man needs to sell himself to any other. Respect, the prescription of the government aims to secure perennial happiness, and ambition have only the country to exploit, because all the tastes of the powerful are within the reach of the poor, if they exist within this country ... America is rich with Universities, Colleges and Schools which are accessible to the deserving poor, comfortable and rich... No Sr. Costa, the American plebian does not appear anything like the bestial one from Europe, the plebian who is only moved by bread.

Continuing with his speech, Dias talks about the causes of revolution:

The government of Spain was destroyed by the French, the Nation was left headless, this allowed various Governments to arise, which though they were illegal were necessary. The cutting of the rules that were the origin of almost all rights and the respect and veneration of the American people disappeared with the Government: The election of Viceroy and governors was legally contested by us, and since reason when it is supported wins, we were defeated in law. In imitation of Spain there was set up in Montevideo a Governing Junta, this gave the example and now it is paying for the outrage committed not against law, but rather against conscience.

Dias holds the English, who are concerned only with their commercial interests, responsible for the intrigues and for the discord in America:

Many have said that England favors the liberty of Europe, this is true, however, England forges chains of slavery... Observe good sirs the principal captains of English intrigue, the interests on which it lies, and the purpose of their tireless work ... Among the English all is mechanization, but a facile mechanization, everything is moved by a single factor, and this factor is commercial interest. For the English government and for the English in general there is nothing that is

not speculation, the faith of the English nation and government is the faith of the merchant, this is not inconsequential ... Through a simple operation, greatly derived from the aforementioned principles, the English Nation is divided into three parties. First, the *Commercial Party*, this is responsible for legally or illegally robbing Nations, laying in this way the foundations for the ruin of states. Second, the *Radical*, this has the task of the work of causing the uprising of people against Governments, with writings, with money, with intrigues and with men. Third, *Constitutional*, this is responsible for making Governments rebel against peoples, supporting them, when they are already weakened, with intrigues, with money, with men, and above all with profound combinations.

In a timely and chronological manner Dias emphasizes the exceptional conditions of the cultural and intellectual life in the Spanish colony, comments on the invasion of Spain by Napoleon and criticizes the Governing Juntas that were formed both in the Iberian peninsula and in America after the French occupation. The character's discourse ends with a severe criticism of England and the aggressive English commercial policy which by stimulating discord, seeks to take advantage of dissidence among the colonists. The two frustrated English invasion of the River Platte region left the elite of the vice-royalty, particularly those who were connected to monopolist trade, in alert against Great Britain. Furthermore, the Anglo-Luso foreign policy for those provinces, implemented shortly after the arrival of D. João in Rio de Janeiro, created distrust among the Portuguese and their allies.

After spending the night in the house of their 'friend Dias,' the Spaniard and the Portuguese restarted their journey to Montevideo. When they arrived in the city the friends walked through the city center, where the Spaniard showed Costa the 'beautiful architecture,' the theaters and the plays that were being staged. The purpose of this was to demonstrate the excellence of the cultural life of the colonies, discussing different questions of art, music and theater. At a certain moment the narrative moved on to the political crisis and the advance of the revolution of Buenos Aires.

Without the aid of the Portuguese army, which was obliged to withdraw from the frontier by English pressure, without money for ammunition and supplies for his troops, General Gaspar Vigodet, commander of the Spanish army based in Montevideo, is obliged to capitulate.<sup>13</sup>

At this time there were many denunciations that the revolutionaries persecuted the Spanish and confiscated their goods, etc. In light of the scenario, the Spanish trader embarks in a 'smack'<sup>14</sup> for Rio de Janeiro.

## Second part

Arriving in the Portuguese court the Spaniard was impressed by the existing social inequalities in the capital of the monarchy. Taking the Account to be propaganda on behalf of the Spanish monarchy, and particularly in defense of Spanish interests in the Banda Oriental, the critiques and depreciations highlighted are shown as a counterpoint to the civilizing discourse of the Rio de Janeiro government.

At this time I visited the numerous island that this magnificent Port contains, as well as the surrounds of the city. What contrasts! What contradictions I observed! What wealth and misery, power and weakness, progressive aggrandizement and immediate annihilation! I saw a society based on all colors from the darkest black to the pink white. I saw a depraved society with the original castes torn among themselves and interspersed with each other in the same way, and finally I saw confusion. I saw a people nursed by wild women, without power, and servants who appeared in the middle of the road naked but for furs.

The narrator meets Costa again in Rio de Janeiro. Walking around the city he witnesses an unusual event, which introduces a new character, the Englishman Mr. Archs. Trying to place a plank between the two banks of a river, Mr. Archs falls and is almost drowned in front of his slaves, who do nothing to help him. The scene results in the following comment from the narrator: “the slaves, since slaves have a soul of clay, stayed still and watched their master’s struggle with death.” The human condition of the slaves is questioned to the extent that they have a ‘soul of clay,’ the question of the humanity of slaves is a discussion that would run for almost all of the nineteenth century.

Seeing the dramatic scene of the Englishman drowning, Costa saves the man and accompanies him to his residence, where his daughter is waiting for him. Ramona, a beautiful 14 year old girl is moved to see her father. In this part romance invades the text, since soon after the first meeting the Portuguese soldier becomes enchanted with the young girl’s beauty. After many thanks the Englishman invites Costa to give French classes to Ramona. Costa accepts and ends up falling deeply in love with Mr. Archs’ daughter.

The political discussion is returned to when the narrator receives a letter from his ‘friend Dias’ – who had joined the royalist forces to fight against the

revolution in Buenos Aires – informing him about the situation in the viceroyalty of Rio da Prata and the surrender of Montevideo.

Fortune, or its prevention, saved them from complete ruin and perhaps even death. Everything was lost except hope and courage never dies in a Spanish heart. This battle having been lost, we left in search of another, even if it be in the Californias. My family went to Buenos Aires, Montevideo after surrendering became a desert. I am thinking about giving you an embrace shortly, I am just waiting for an opportune moment to embark, then you will learn everything... The court in Rio de Janeiro had by indirect manners contributed to that disgrace, since it had not lost hope of capturing Montevideo and its campaign, because it could not do this when it was in the possession of the Spanish, contributed to it passing into the hands of the revolution, and protesting caution, expanded its frontiers;

Under English pressure the government of Rio de Janeiro sought to negotiate with the revolutionary forces from Buenos Aires, abandoning the Spanish resistance in Montevideo to its own devices. From this point on, the political discourse alternates with the novelesque, the scenes of the romance between Costa and Ramona insert emotion into the narrative. Costa continues to make frequent visits to Ramona and discovers that she is also in love with him. The narrator and the Portuguese go to Mr. Archs' house and after a presentation of singing and piano playing by Ramona, the young girl retires and the three men start a conversation about the political situation in America.

We went to eat, asked what news there was, and the English merchant said that it seems that there had been a new departure of French, who after the peace had come to Brazil, and had attacked the *quintos* (taxes) which had come from Minas, though, happily they were beaten. Then the Englishman said that on occasion more than five thousand Spaniards immigrants from [Spanish] America and it did not appear that a single one had committed any misdeeds and deserved to be imprisoned. While the French who had arrived to the contrary had committed thefts, murders, fraudulent breakages and finally there was no a single one in who he could trust one hundred thousand *reis*; and laughing he said 'Gentlemen, since the class of trade with whom France intends to compete with us.' With this we finished our dinner, white wine, coffee and cigars were brought out and we continued our conversation much enlivened.

The French threat was never discarded, reports were constantly announced, rumors of the arrival of French fleets in America. The English, who

had commercial control of Brazil and the southern provinces of Spanish America, feared French competition and the occupation of the American colonies by Napoleon, since Joseph Bonaparte was sitting on the Spanish throne. In this way Mr. Archs' comments are representative of English discourses against the French.

In January 1820 the narrator gets sick and embarks for Europe, and the second part ends.

### **Third Part**

Due to the political instability in Brazil – liberal conspiracies were spreading – the narrator is obliged to disembark in Bahia. Arriving in Salvador, he experiences the echoes of the 1816 Pernambuco Revolution in that province. In Salvador there were many groups of conspirators consisting of soldiers, sugar mill owners, liberal workers and merchants. Sedition had caused the governor, Marcos de Noronha Brito, to intervene in the movement. The news about the liberal movements in Europe rapidly spread throughout America, and the narrator noted that when he left Rio de Janeiro he also “heard of the success of the revolution of Riego”.

In January 1820 the Liberal Revolution erupted in Spain. General Riego revolted in Cádiz and was accompanied by risings in Corunha, Saragossa and Barcelona. After the Revolution, the 1812 Constitution was restored. Due to the liberal revolt in Spain, the English General Beresford wrote to D. João VI informing him that the changes occurring in Spain would have impact on Portugal. The general believed that Spain could attack Portugal as compensation for its American losses. To a certain extent Beresford was right: in 1821 the Liberal Revolution of Porto erupted and the pressure increased for the return of the king to Portugal. A year later D. Pedro declared the Independence of Brazil.

While still in Salvador the narrator met Spanish coming from Peru, who were going to Spain to justify the deposition of Viceroy Pazuela.<sup>15</sup> Probably these men represented the members of the royalist leaders of Aznapuquio, who deposed the viceroy in 1821.

1815 saw the beginning of the plots of France in relation to America, the Spies of that Nation sold us their secrets. The French government agreed our ruin with Fernando, a French squadron went to Lima and brought the arrangements and bought the Viceroy. We knew of this and we deposed him. The agreement between

Fernando and France had the basis to throw us into anarchy and this way we would have been beaten by the American revolution [...] Since France did not have colonies but rather lots of settlements, what suited it was a weak government in Spain, which it could influence, and this way resolve this necessity.

A new character appears, Sr. Silva, a Portuguese man living in Brazil. Silva portrays the disputes and rivalries between the Portuguese and Brazilians at the moment when the metropole in crisis demands the recolonization of Brazil. Silva's speech, given at the request of the Peruvian deputies, reveals a certain amount of arrogance and a feeling of superiority that the Portuguese felt in relation to the Brazilian people, which for Silva consisted of blacks and people of mixed blood:

Brazil is very weak for the enterprise in which it is taking part, the revolution has in general only been based on some shocks ... Brazilian social organization is vicious, rather it is vile, it breeds dissolution everywhere ... the people are weak, consisting of slaves and tyrants, the tyrants are slaves if they stop being tyrants. Now, in such a state and with so many guarantees, how could the revolution not explode? However, you want to know why we can see twenty thousand Portuguese besieged by two thousand five hundred boy, mulattos, *rotos*, badly armed and badly led poor ... The Portuguese Nation to exist need to fight there or here, develop its strength and acquire robustness, creating in this way a mass of heroes, however, their road was closed which they and the events had opened in the revolution in Brazil.

On 2 July 1823 Brazilian troops entered the city of Salvador, then occupied by a Portuguese army, and captured it, consolidating the Brazilian victory. The new government ordered the evacuation of the city.

Given the uncertainty of the situation the narrator continues towards London and after travelling for 54 days reaches the English capital. The account enters its final act with very dramatic and emotional power. In the hotel where he is staying the narrator hears the moans of a man, and when he asks what is going on, he is told that the sounds come from a Portuguese man returned from Brazil. When he enters the room, he finds Costa sick and depressed. Several days later Costa tells about the end of his romance with Ramona, but does not mention the outcome of his love story.

The final part reinforces the criticisms of the liberal movement and the disorder which the world is facing due to the new ideologies spreading through the West.

For the *grande finale* the principal characters meet in the hotel in London: the Spaniards/Peruvians who the narrator had met in Salvador, Sr. Costa and a canon who is now part of the group, as a representative of the clergy. The canon makes a long speech about the evils of masonry:

Sirs, it has been two centuries since an infernal sect of so-called philosophers started through secret associations to undermine the sacred and profane customs of Nations, spreading sacrilegious ideas against religion and its ministers, and against governments. This is how they work in their filthy underworlds, in which they twist the education of men who have already graduated, and with the left hand they take advantage of youth, educating them in their maxims, with the aim of having them serve in the future in their perverse projects. This is what they have done for a century and a half, since in the fear of the past their attacks were more decisive, undermining and corrupting for this the mass of the people, through incendiary, sacrilegious and anti-political writings; and under the banner of honor, justice, obedience and virtue they exhort the people to break laws and consider sovereigns and priests imposters, usurpers and tyrants.

After the Canon finished speaking, Sr. Costa and the narrator retire. The friends go for a walk through London and decide to go to the theater. On 1 March 1823 the narrator receives a letter from Dias had forced him to go to various American nations – he had been in Panama, Jamaica and Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

After four and a half months of a harsh journey through the arid deserts of Brazil, I finally reached S<sup>ta</sup> Cruz; I soon wrote to Valdez asking him to employ me in the Army ... and he soon ordered me to raise two companies of horse and two of Infantry in the Province of Mòxos and Chiquitos, nominating me as their commander with the rank of Lieutenant Coronel, giving me reserved instructions on how to confer with the subaltern commanders, and in which ones I should trust.

The revolutions which resulted in the independence of the Spanish colonies consisted of two phases: the first was the obtaining freedom from the metropole and the second was civil war, when the regional leaders fought for power. The civil war last for almost thirty years, devastating and destroying agriculture, disarticulating trade and almost completely ruining the prosperous American colonial economy.



In the letter, Dias mentioned the romance of Mr. Costa with Ramona. This reminds Costa of his lover, so he narrates to his friend the misfortune of his great passion. Costa tells how one night, overcome by jealousy, he entered Archs' house when everyone was sleeping and saw a figure going to Ramona's room. Extremely jealous, he took out his dagger and stabbed the person. This woke the people in the house, who found one of the slaves stabbed and collapsed on the ground. Seeing this Mr. Archs expelled Costa from his house, accusing him of being ungrateful. Costa is overcome by despair. Dismayed, he looks for the family doctor, revealing that Ramona is pregnant. The doctor goes to Mr. Archs' house to try to persuade him that Sr. Costa loves his daughter, but the old Englishman will not give in and faced with his stubbornness the doctor, aiming to persuade him, tells him the secret of Ramona's pregnancy. Furious, the father enters his daughter's room and violently beats her, resulting in her suffering a miscarriage. Nine days later Ramona dies.

#### CONCLUSION: POLITICAL AND NOVELLA PLOTS

Drama, impossible love, and suffering caused by passion and by jealousy characterized novelesque themes, a type of literature that was very common in the nineteenth century. The novella was born in the scope of the literary movement identified as Romantic, and appropriates a Romanesque imagination, prioritizing in its writings emotion, externalizing the interior world of the writer, characterizing his individuality.

The historical novella was a genre that was specially valorized between 1789 and 1840. The style soon spread to France and other European countries, finally reaching America. However, its greatest diffusion can be explained by the emergence of the press. The newspaper as the means of communication led to the formation of a new public, intimately linked to the ascension of the bourgeoisie, who looked in literature for the representation of their daily life and a means of propagating their ideas.

Poems were read to a select public who frequented literary soirées and parties. New libertarian ideas efficiently used as propaganda the experience of the bourgeoisie who moved between poetry meetings and brought it to the public sphere. The public reading of verses and sonnets, generally with political content, became frequent in the middle of the nineteenth century. There are also various reports about the presentation of political plays in bars, public squares, etc., as well as public readings of pamphlets and leaflets.

Reinforcing this idea, the chronicler Adolfo Morales de los Rios Filho made this observation:

The actions of small newspapers, the majority of which supported the opposition, pleased the people. Or better, pleased those who read to the people, since the latter could not do this because of their crass ignorance. However, since they could not read the little people liked to listen to what the gazettes said.<sup>16</sup>

Particularly in moments of great political agitation, activists used this resort because the large majority of the population were illiterate. They sought to use simple writing, linked to daily life, as a form of approximating and mobilizing the people and their leaders, and consequently the cause they defended. It was this common to find political discourses in the form of dialogues published in the pamphlets of the time, since it was a more dynamic and didactic form which made the content easier to be learned.

The hypothesis that the *Political and Sentimental Account* is a manuscript gazette is justified principally by its eminently political content. However, it does not have the style of a popular historical novella. The text mixes fact and fiction, since many characters were really part of the political scenario of the moment described and many of the facts really happened, however the relationship between fiction and fact takes place in an artificial, almost caricatured form. Another fact reinforces this hypothesis: the lack of concern with literary norms and with the quality of the plot and the text. The narrative is choppy, without intermediation between the themes, and the text lacks the fluidity of a literary piece.

Furthermore, the romance is of no importance within the scope of the narrative, few pages are dedicated to the amorous adventures of Ramona and Costa, although the outcome of the relationship between the lovers is extremely dramatic, highlighting the traditions of honor and dignity that were very strong in the popular sectors of colonial society. The political discourse in defense of the Spanish monarchy, exalting the quality of life and culture in the colonies, with criticisms of the liberal revolutions and Masonry are undoubtedly the tonic of the text. The Portuguese monarchy is seen in the 'Account' as backward; the English are solely concerned with their commercial interests and the French and their revolution are the 'universal evil.'

The *Political and Sentimental Account* ends in 1823, with the two friends leaving for Lisbon, where the revolt known as 'Vila-Francada', led by D.

Miguel, the youngest son of D. João and D. Carlota Joaquina, put an end of the first Portuguese constitutional experience, dissolving the *Cortes* and restoring absolutist monarchy.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> While working on the project that resulted in the text, Roberta T. Gonçalves had a grant from Pibic-CNPq/UF RJ and wrote a monography about the document.

<sup>2</sup> BOUZA Alvarez, Fernando. *Corre manuscrito*: una historia cultural del Siglo do Oro. Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2001, p.22.

<sup>3</sup> LEWIN, Boleslao. La Conspiracion de los Franceses en Buenos Aires (1795). *Anuário del Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas*, Rosário: Universidad Nacional del Litoral/Facultad de Filosofia y Letras, v.4, 1960.

<sup>4</sup> SHULTZ, Kirsten. *Versalhes tropical*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2008, p.174.

<sup>5</sup> NEVES, Lucia Maria Bastos P. *Corcundas constitucionais*: cultura e política (1820-1823). Rio de Janeiro: Revan; Faperj, 2003.

<sup>6</sup> In relation to the censorship of printed material, see: TENGARRINHA, José. *História da imprensa periódica portuguesa*. Lisboa: Caminho, 1989.

<sup>7</sup> CUNHA, Waldir da. Coleção de jornais manuscritos, pasquins e boletins 1741-1930. *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional*, Rio de Janeiro, 1994, p.139.

<sup>8</sup> MIRANDA, Tiago C. P. Reis. Historiografia e tradição crítica: novela exemplar dos “jornais manuscritos”, século XVIII. In: SOIHET, Rachel; BICALHO, Maria Fernanda; GOUVÊA, Maria de Fátima (Org.). *Culturas políticas*: ensaios de história cultural, história política e ensino da história. Rio de Janeiro: Mauad, 2005, p.155-170.

<sup>9</sup> José Gervasio Artigas (1764-1850), a politician and soldier from Uruguay. During the Hispano-Portuguese War he fought the English in the Platte. At this moment the liberation movement of the Spanish colonies began.

<sup>10</sup> Francisco Javier Elio (1767-1822), born in Pamplona, was a Spanish soldier. As governor he had to face the revolution of the River Platte.

<sup>11</sup> In relation to this, see: AZEVEDO, Francisca Nogueira. *Carlota Joaquina na Corte do Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2003; and GONÇALVES, Roberta Teixeira. *Entre duas fábulas*: o processo de construção da soberania uruguaia (1825-1828). Master's thesis, Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro. Seropédica, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Las Piedras is a region located about 20 km from Montevideo. In the battle of Las Piedras (18 May 1811) Manuel Francisco Artigas, brother of Gervásio Artigas, commanded the troops from the Banda Oriental, brought by Captain José Fructuoso Rivera y Toscana and Juan Antonio Lavalleja; the troops under Artigas were victorious over the Spanish troops and besieged Montevideo.

<sup>13</sup> In relation to this, see AZEVEDO, 2003.

<sup>14</sup> Smack: a small vessel used in Spanish America and in Brazil for coastal trade.

<sup>15</sup> Joaquin de la Pazuela y Sanchez Muñoz de Velasco. Viceroy of Peru between 7 July 1816 and 21 Jan. 1821.

<sup>16</sup> DE LOS RIOS FILHO, Adolfo Morales. *O Rio de Janeiro Imperial*. 2.ed. Rio de Janeiro: Topbooks; Ed. UniverCidade, 2008, p.469.