

## **The King of America notes on the late acclamation of D. João VI in Brazil**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The article presents some analytical possibilities for the delayed decision to acclaim D. João VI in Brazil, though the King had assumed the title of monarch following the death of his mother, the Queen D. Maria I, on 20 March 1816. The decision to hold the acclamation and the grandiose form of the ceremony almost two years later have to be analyzed in light of the changes in the European context after the defeat of Napoleon, the restoration of monarchical forces through the treaties of the Congress of Vienna, and in Brazil by taking into account the new profiles of D. João's ministers in the final years of his stay in America

“What European monarch crosses the Ocean.  
And to the new Fourth Part is given to the glory  
Of possessing a throne?”<sup>1</sup>

“We can discover the largesse of the Prince in the multitude of spectacles”<sup>2</sup>

### **1- The chess pieces**

The first verse quoted above is part of one of the various poems written to commemorate the acclamation of D. João VI in America, and intended to show the pride that was beating in the hearts of the subjects of the Kingdom of Brazil to hold such a grandiose event. Published in 1817, the poem was actually written before the event itself occurred, as it would only be held the following year. Even the announcement of the acclamation date only happened after the poet's

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<sup>1</sup> Joaquim José Pedro Lopes. *Acclamação de Sua Magestade Fidelissimo Senhor D. João VI. Rei do reino unido de Portugal, Brasil e Algarves*. Rio de Janeiro, *Impressão Regia*, Anno 1817.

<sup>2</sup> *Panegírico a D. João III*, João de Barros.

enthusiastic commemoration. The royal decree that set the date of the long awaited ceremony was published on 28 January 1818, setting the day of 6 February for the recognition of D. João as the King of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves, 'Of Here and Overseas' in Africa, Lord of Guinea and the Conquest, Navigation and Commerce of Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India.

Although he had used the title of King since the death of his mother the Queen D. Maria I, on 20 March 1816, D. João waited almost two years to receive the legal, ecclesiastical and popular oath to succeed to the throne. There must have been many reasons for such a long postponement, though they have been little discussed and analyzed in Brazilian or Portuguese historiography. In this text, I will just try to present some possibilities to explain why monarchical ceremony was changed in America, as well to establish the links between the colonial and European contingencies and, also, the unexpected results of the Royal Family transfer from Lisbon to Brazil.

When he arrived in Brazil in 1808 D. João was Prince Regent, a title he had used since 1792, due to the hindrance of his mother, the Queen D. Maria I, who was seriously sick. Between 1808 and 1818, Brazil was raised, in 1815, from a colony rank to the status of the United Kingdom of Portugal and Brazil; the Napoleonic wars that caused the escape of the Royal Family to America had ended; in 1816, the Queen died and Prince D. João became D. João VI. In 1817 his royal authority was challenged by the Pernambuco rebellion and, also, by a military riot led by Gomes Freire Andrade in Portugal.

It is not easy to understand the connections between these events, including the pressure that D. João had suffered to return to Portugal since 1812, and the delay of the acclamation ceremony. An official act which, *in accordance with ancient practice*, as the King himself said in the decree, always took place at the time of the royal power transference. Nor is it clear how and why, after some much time, D. João decided to hold such a grandiose celebration, considering his discreet nature and the low rank of the Portuguese Reign amidst the European Monarchies.

The events following the Napoleon defeat by the Austria, Prussia, Russia and England alliance and the negotiations undertaken during the Congress of Vienna, deeply altered the political frame in Europe. Actually, from the end of 1814, thus before the final defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo, diplomatic accords had sought to frame the European map and to impose the sanctions on France. Indeed, 1815 was a time of strong conservative reaction and strengthening of the *Ancient Regime* monarchies.

The Portuguese situation at this time is almost pathetic, due to England's unwillingness to help Portugal in recover the immense Portuguese losses resulted from Napoleonic expansion. In

this point of view, D. João's decision to remain in Rio de Janeiro, a capital so far from Europe, distressed the Portuguese situation. Nevertheless, D. João was quite able to preserve the Portuguese sovereignty and, also, to restore some dignity for the Portuguese monarchy. The rise of Brazil to the rank of the United Kingdom of Portugal and the Algarves, in 1815, and the decision to hold the acclamation with pomp and circumstance, albeit late, confirms the Regent's efforts to keep distance from the European pressures and, also, to reinforce the power of the Portuguese monarchy in this new age.

The inequality of the conditions of Portugal and Spain in regard to the other European monarchies during the Congress of Vienna cannot be doubted<sup>3</sup>. But, above all, our main purpose now is to test the pros and cons resulting from the remain of the court to Rio de Janeiro. Actually, if the rise of Brazil as a United Kingdom seemed good for the ancient Colony, by making itself equal to Portugal as a Kingdom and holding a ceremony for the acclamation of a King, this fact caused a lot of troubles to D. João in Portugal. On the one hand, the merger of the United Kingdom in Brazil, after 1815, and the acclamation of D. João VI, in 1818, expressed not only a growing Portuguese autonomy in political matters but, above all, the increasing tensions between Portugal and England. However, on the other hand, they strained even more the already troubled relations between D. João and his Portuguese subjects. The liberal movement that would be raised in Oporto, during 1820, resulted, also, from these facts.

Anyway, I will try to analyze the acclamation of D. João in America based on a main hypothesis, by stressing it as a result of a particular and context, and not as an expected process that would lead Brazil to independence. Although the acclamation of D. João is almost unmentioned by the historiography referred to Brazil independence from Portugal<sup>4</sup>, the years

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<sup>3</sup> The two Iberian states had long lost the supremacy they had held at the beginning of the modern era, becoming satellites of England and France. At the end of the eighteenth century the French Revolution had made the Luso-British and Hispano-French alliance important parts of the fragile European balance. The Portuguese option to leave Europe for America prevented the humiliation suffered by the Spanish with the imprisonment of their monarch following the Napoleonic invasion. Later results were equally unpredictable, leaving Portugal without a King and even more susceptible to English political dominion, while the Bourbons returned to power in Spain, but lost a large part of their American colonial domains.

<sup>4</sup> The historiography that analyzed the independence is both vast and very rich, with some examples being the following: Carlos Guilherme Mota (org.). *1822. Dimensões*. São Paulo, Perspectiva, 1986; Emília Viotti da Costa "Introdução ao estudo da emancipação política do Brasil" in Carlos Guilherme Mota. *Brasil em perspectiva*. São Paulo, Difel, 1986; Fernando Antônio Novais and Carlos Guilherme Mota. *A independência política do Brasil*. São Paulo, Hucitec, 1996; Iara Lis Carvalho de Souza. *Pátria Coroada. O Brasil como corpo político autônomo, 1780-1831*. São Paulo, Unesp, 1999; Lucia Maria Bastos Pereira das Neves. *Condições e constitucionais. A cultura política da independência (1820-1822)*. Rio de Janeiro, Revan/Faperj, 2003; István Jancsó and João Paulo G. Pimenta. "Peças de um mosaico (ou apontamentos para o estudo da emergência da identidade nacional brasileira)" In C.G. Mota (org.). *A viagem incompleta. A experiência brasileira (1500-2000). Formação: histórias*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. São Paulo, 2000.

1808-1822 use to be considered by the Brazilian historians more in regard emancipation process than the urgencies imposed by the political circumstances.

## **2- From colony to the the United Kingdom of Brazil**

The role played by D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho in the decision to transfer the Portuguese royal family to Brazil is well known. One of the exponents of the Enlightenment in Portugal, he held various important political positions in the Portuguese court from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards. He was diplomatic representative to the court of Turin in 1778, Secretary of State for the Marine and Overseas Dominions between 1796 and 1801; president of the Royal Treasury between 1801 and 1803 and Minister of War and Foreign Affairs in the regency of D. João in Brasil, between 1808 and 1812, when he died. But the rise of the 1<sup>st</sup> Count of Linhares also had some setbacks, of which the most serious led to his withdrawal from political life in 1803, due to his disagreement with the political alliance with the French sustained by Antônio de Araújo Azevedo. D.Rodrigo bet instead on the alliance with England, which ended up prevailing. Azevedo was part of the Francophile wing, initially defeated, but later he would recover his prestige, after the death of D. Rodrigo<sup>5</sup>. Lacking any other choice, Portugal abandoned the policy of neutrality<sup>6</sup> in the conflicts triggered by the French revolution, caught by the choice between agreeing to French pressure or confirming the alliance with the United Kingdom.

In those difficult years, Antônio de Araújo Azevedo, future Count of Barca, was opposed not only to the alliance with the British, but also against the rise of Brazil into the head of the Portuguese Empire, “from where what had been lost in Europe could be reconquered”<sup>7</sup>, supported by D. Rodrigo. Antônio de Araújo Azevedo was more concerned with the position of Portugal in Europe than with the overseas dominions. Although he had supported the final decision for the transmigration of the court, Azevedo lost his position as minister of Foreign Affairs and War to

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<sup>5</sup> In relation to the Portuguese scenario in the years that anteceded the coming of the Bragança to Brazil, see Lúcia Maria Bastos Pereira das Neves. *As representações napoleônicas em Portugal: imaginário e política (c.1808-1810)*. Rio de Janeiro. Thesis presented for the position of *Professor Titular* in the Institute of Philosophy and Human Sciences, UERJ, 2002. In relation to the Count of Barca, see L.B.P.N. Antônio Araujo de Azevedo. Ronaldo Vainfas (dir.). *Dicionário do Brasil Imperial (1822-1889)*. Rio de Janeiro, Objetiva, 2002, p.50-1.

<sup>6</sup> F. A. Novais. “Política de neutralidade”. In *Portugal e Brasil na crise do Antigo Sistema Colonial (1777-1808)*. 2ª edição. São Paulo: Hucitec, 1981, pp. 17-56.

<sup>7</sup> Apud L.M.B.P.N. *As representações napoleônicas em Portugal: imaginário e política (c.1808-1810)*, p.55.

D. Rodrigo in Rio de Janeiro. With the death of the Count of Linhares in 1812, he returned to the ministry, also holding, after 1814, the position of the Marine and Overseas Affairs.

In Europe, the coming defeat of Napoleon led France to sign the preliminary Treaty of Paris on 30 May 1814. Tensions between Portugal and England were heightened. The monarchy saw itself as having been ignored by the British representative which accepted an agreement – seen by Portugal as harmful - without consulting it. The lack of effort of the British government in protecting Portuguese rights<sup>8</sup> became obvious in several matters. For instance: the Portuguese decision to return Guyana to France, an effective conquest on which Portugal had expended men and resources since 1809, without any compensation<sup>9</sup>; the case of Olivença, annexed to Spain since 1801<sup>10</sup>; the maritime pact between the signatory powers of the treaty – Prussia, Austria, Russia, England and France – excluding D. João.

Many questions were involved in the agreements signed between May 1814 and 9 June 1815, when the final act of the congress was signed. The diplomatic sources for this period is extremely rich and Oliveira Lima sums up the disputes that most mattered to Portugal in the chapter dedicated to Vienna in his book<sup>11</sup>. However, I would like to stress the changeover in Luso-British relationship, the increasing approximation between Portugal and France and, last, the impacts of this policy in Brazil.

The return of Antônio de Araújo Azevedo to foreign affairs meant, in this way, a revival of Count of Barca old convictions and the political conjuncture for a renewal of Franco-Portuguese relations. The most obvious evidence of this was the arrival of the so-called French Mission to Brazil in January 1816, whose artists would play an important role in the acclamation

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<sup>8</sup> For an analysis of the question of the conquest of French Guyana Francesa by the Portuguese, see Arthur Cezar Ferreira Reis. *A ocupação de Caiena*. Sergio Buarque de Holanda (dir.). *HGCB*. Brasil monárquico. Book II. Volume 1. O processo de emancipação. 9<sup>th</sup> edition. Rio de Janeiro. Bertrand Brasil, 2001 and Oliveira Lima. *A discussão da Guiana*. D. João VI no Brasil. The advance into French space in America had the successful intention of retailing against the Napoleonic invasion of the peninsula.

<sup>9</sup> For an analysis of the question of the conquest of French Guyana Francesa by the Portuguese, see Arthur Cezar Ferreira Reis. *A ocupação de Caiena*. Sergio Buarque de Holanda (dir.). *HGCB*. Brasil monárquico. Book II. Volume 1. O processo de emancipação. 9<sup>th</sup> edition. Rio de Janeiro. Bertrand Brasil, 2001 and Oliveira Lima. *A discussão da Guiana*. D. João VI no Brasil. The advance into French space in America had the successful intention of retailing against the Napoleonic invasion of the peninsula.

<sup>10</sup> The dispute for Olivença was old. It is located on the frontier between the two Iberian countries in Upper Alentejo, on the left bank of the Rio Guadiana, neighbor to Elvas and 24 km to the south of Badajoz. An area of much litigation and conflict since the thirteenth century, the bridge that linked the two sides of the frontier was destroyed during the War of the Spanish Succession in 1709. The declaration of war between the two countries in 1801 led to the Spanish occupation of Olivença, confirmed by the Treaty of Badajoz in the same year. The Franco-Spanish project of occupying and dividing Portugal resulted in the royal family going to Brazil, while the agreements made with the English resulted in Spanish control being maintained. Despite the recognition in Vienna of Portuguese rights to the territory of Olivença, it remained as part of the Spanish state after the Bourbon restoration.

<sup>11</sup> See Chapter XII: No Congresso de Viena, op.cit., pp. 301-334.

ceremony<sup>12</sup>. Actually, there were strong connections between the rise of Brazil to the United Kingdom, in December 1815, and the arrival of the French artists, the following month.

The remarkable change in the Court manners shall to be stressed D.João to enrich and add grandeur to the land that was sheltering them. When the Napoleonic danger ceased, the option of remaining in America and making it equal in dignity to the European Kingdoms inverted the sense of the initial relationship between the head of the monarchy and its overseas dominions.

The decision to raise Brazil to a Kingdom have to be understood in the context of the restructuring of monarchical forces in Europe in general and the role that Portugal still expected to play in this new conjuncture. It was a difficult task, since D. João intended to act in the so far America to recover power in the Old World. Although in Europe, the Portuguese decision sounded like a further Lusitanian eccentricity, and had little effect on the political chess game of the continent.

Ignoring the pressures to return to Portugal, both from the Portuguese and the English, D. João decided to change the status of America, instead of returning the Monarchical court to the old Kingdom. Raising Brazil to the status of Kingdom confirmed the option of the then Prince Regent to stay overseas, where he found free from political pressures. Besides, his new Francophile squires encouraged this long distance action, considered more cautious by them.

Since 1812, when Napoleonic troops had left the Kingdom, the date of the return of the court to Portugal was been estimated, according to what was written by the assistant in the Royal Library, Luis dos Santos Marrocos<sup>13</sup>. “The news has spread here that we will soon return to Lisbon; but this *soon* cannot be earlier than in two years time...”. By including himself in the Bragantine court, Marrocos added: “...whoever knows the certainty about this destiny is remaining quiet; S.A.R, even heard that they are breaking their heads with the calculations that are made, and leaving them with their hallucinations (...). I can assure you that the Baron of Rio

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<sup>12</sup> For a discussion about the character of the coming of the French artists to Brazil, see Lili M. Scwharcz. *Missão Francesa* in Lucia Bastos Pereira das Neves and Ronaldo Vainfas (direção). *Dicionário Joanino*. Rio de Janeiro, Objetiva, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> Luís Joaquim dos Santos Marrocos accompanied the second shipment of books from the Royal Library of Ajuda in March 1811 and reached Rio de Janeiro in June that year. The first shipment had come with the royal family in 1808 and in 1810 the National Library of Rio de Janeiro, created by decree on 27 June 1810 had around 50,000 items. The letters that Marrocos sent regularly to his father, Francisco José, are precious sources about life in the court and the city of Rio de Janeiro. His manner of confusing himself with the actual royal family expresses well the strong monarchist sentiment that linked it to the destinies of Portugal. They can be found in *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro*, 1934, volume LVI. For his work in the Royal Library, see Lilia Moritz Schwartz, Paulo Cesar de Azevedo and Angela Marques da Costa. *A longa viagem da Biblioteca dos Reis*. Do terremoto de Lisboa à Independência do Brasil. 1<sup>st</sup> reprinting. São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 2002.

Seco is building a beautiful Palace in *Largo dos Ciganos* and other people are laying very strong roots in this country.”<sup>14</sup>

Marrocos mentioned here what Pedro Octávio Carneiro da Cunha<sup>15</sup> called the “naturalization of the Court”, that means, the enrooting of part of the entourage that had accompanied the royal family to Brazil. Antônio de Araujo was one of the most ‘naturalized’ of those who “took good advantage of ostracism”: in Brazil he bought lands for cattle breeding in the south, becoming a landlord and businessman without giving up the his intellectualized and political life. Araujo was a typical *Iberian enlightened*, for which reason he saw no contradiction between the rational knowledge and the monarchical order. The first Count of Barca, graduated in Law at the Coimbra University, had been the minister of the Portuguese Court in the Hague, in 1787, where he had sustained an agreement with France, but was defeated by D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho positions *pro* British alliance. Anyway, Antônio de Araujo had been plenipotentiary minister to the French Republic in 1795, 1797 and 1801, when he was transferred to Saint Petersburg, serving there for three years. Previously, in 1788, he had studied science and German literature and mineralogy.

When he reached Brazil with the court in 1808, he was Minister of Foreign Affairs and War, a position he lost to D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho. He remained out of politics until the death of his rival, in 1812. The further defeat of the Napoleonic Army and the restoration of the Bourbons made possible a new attempt to any approximation with France. A critic of the excessive English power in Portuguese politics and business, Araujo’s position was strengthened after Vienna by the paltry defense by England of Portuguese interests. His wish of inviting French artists who spread the ‘praiseworthy or desirable’ aspects of French civilization, melded politics and the scientific interest of that time. The Count of Barca even set up in his own home, with the approval of D. João, a Chemistry Laboratory, where he also gathered a vast and important library, which became part of the Royal Library after his death.

The adhesion of the Count of Barca to the project of raising Brazil to the United Kingdom conjoined well his personal interests based in Brazil and his old political convictions referred to the Portuguese monarchy. However, this political decision had several results. In Brazil, the remain of the court in Rio de Janeiro resulted in taxes and duties for the *capitanias*,

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<sup>14</sup> *Apud*. Oliveira Lima. *Op.cit.*, p. 349.

<sup>15</sup> Pedro Octávio Carneiro da Cunha. *A fundação de um império liberal*. Sergio Buarque de Holanda (dir.). *HGCB*. Brasil monárquico. Book II. Volume 1. O processo de emancipação. 9th edition. Rio de Janeiro. Bertrand Brasil, 2001, p.147

which had become *provinces*<sup>16</sup>. The northern provinces complained against the preference that D. João used to give for the southern provinces, mainly Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais e São Paulo. Rio de Janeiro seemed to be a new Lisbon. The foundation of the United Kingdom legally 'neutralized' this inequality, although it had not altered the intra-regional tensions that the court had implemented.

Abroad, it was a time of monarchical restorations, thus the political and symbolic rites related to the royalty were increased. Mello Moraes, in his *História do Brasil-reino e do Brasil-império*<sup>17</sup>, states that the foundation of the United Kingdom in Brazil was, firstly, an idea came from the French minister Talleyrand, according to whom the remain of D. João in Brazil for "as long as possible", would be suitable for Portugal and "even for all Europe", in order to keep "the ties between our European and American possessions". The minister, advising the Portuguese representative in Vienna, the Count of Palmela<sup>18</sup>, disapproved the support given by the French for the "revolution of English America", in the 1770's, and also the virtual independence of the Spanish colonies, whose loss, in his view, was "due to the misgovernment of that monarchy". For these reasons, Talleyrand said:

"I would consider it good fortune that the ties between Portugal and Brazil be strengthened by all possible means; this country should flatter its peoples, to destroy the idea of colony that is so disagreeable to them, and it should be given the title of Kingdom, and your sovereign should be King of the United Kingdom of Portugal and Brazil.."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> The *ilustrado* and councilor of D. João VI, Silvestre Pinheiro Ferreira, informed Portugal that nothing would change in administrative practice: "It is true that nothing else will be done other than this simple declaration [the elevation to the United Kingdom]; and instead of regulating the public administration of Brazil in this conformity, everything will continue as before, and the provinces will continue to be governed by the judgment of the governors as arbitrarily and absolute as before". Cf. Estado Político do Brasil. Informações às Cortes Portuguesas por Silvestre Pinheiro Ferreira. *Apud* Maria de Lourdes Viana Lyra. *A utopia do poderoso império*. Rio de Janeiro, Sette Letras, 1994, p.163.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Alexandre José de Mello Moraes. *Historia do Brasil-Reino e Brasil-Imperio*. Rio de Janeiro : Typ. by Pinheiro and C., 1871. 2 vols.

<sup>18</sup> Pedro de Holstein was made Count in 1812 in retribution for his successful actions in Cadiz where he participated in the Peninsular War. The same year he went to London to substitute Domingos Antônio de Souza Coutinho, Count of Funchal and brother of D. Rodrigo. After the defeat of Napoleon he was nominated the plenipotentiary representative of Portugal at the Congress of Vienna.

<sup>19</sup> *Apud* Oliveira Lima, p.335.



Tallyerand firmly sustained the strengthens of the monarchist order, although he had served the revolutionary Directorate and even Napoleon<sup>20</sup>, He did not care about the consequences of the *advice* given to Palmela, whether in regard to the tense relations between the Portuguese and the British, or the feelings of the Portuguese subjects whom the King had left in Portugal.

In Brazil, for men like Marrocos, who always sustained the ties between Kingdom and colony, the return of the Court to Lisbon was imperative. But what he saw in Rio de Janeiro did not encourage him:

“Some say that on 17 December [1814] that our return will be published, and that this will be in March; others that it will be all of the next year; finally others say it will not happen while His Majesty is alive, or while the time prescribed in the most recent treaty with England is not finished. From this you can conclude that we are blind in relation to this; since we see great works and expenditures continue; in Andrahy (2<sup>1/2</sup> leagues from this city) a fine palace is being prepared, with 50 officers, for the Princess Carlota to live in and to leave the place in Botafogo. In the Library the works continue with the same vigor...”

A year later, even more tired of waiting, he believed that the return of the court:

“will become a question like the Sect of the Sebastianists: They say here that the Palace of Ajuda is being prepared for the royal family when they go there. I can also tell you that the Palace of Palácio de S. Cristóvão is being prepared and it has been increased by more than half, so that it can see in the future, during the Summer, all the royal family.”<sup>21</sup>

Marrocos was right. In December 1815, in the middle of the Summer, D. João decided to raise Brazil to the status of Kingdom. However, it must to be say that the arrival of the English fleet in Rio with the mission of transporting the Braganças back to Portugal played an important role in D.João decision. Perhaps it was decisive at that time. The same Marrocos told his father,

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<sup>20</sup> Charles-Maurice de Tayllerand provided political services to governments of different political orientations: he started with Louis XVI, then went on the Directorate, the Consulate and the Empire of Napoleon Bonaparte, before turning against the Emperor by assisting the restoration of the Bourbons to the French throne. He played an important role in the political architecture defined in Vienna, re-balancing French power in European geo-politics and attenuating the seriousness of the punishments for the Napoleonic wars.

<sup>21</sup> The two citations are from Oliveira Lima, idem, p. 351-2.

in April 1815, about the unsuccessful attempt of Lord Strangford, the English ambassador in Portugal, and also the Vice-Admiral and Field Marshall in Portugal, Lord Beresford, trying to convince D. João to leave Rio de Janeiro. Actually, the persistence of the British left D. João “so angry and upset”, according to Marrocos’ s account. In fact, when the Prince had left the Kingdom he had seen no choice, but now he was entirely convinced that the best thing to do was remain in Brazil. Besides his fondness to live in Rio de Janeiro, D. João was really disgusted with the British constraints, wherever in Brazil or Portugal.

More than a diplomatic act, the foundation of the United Kingdom of Portugal and the Algarves, in 16 December 1815, was a political act with various important meanings: it responded to internal pressures as would be shown in 1817; it confirmed the Prince intention to take back control of his Kingdom and to reduce the weight of England over the Portuguese dominions; it restated the commitment with the monarchical order in Brazil before the several independence movements which had occurred in Spanish America at that time. Above all, it intended to highlight the grandeur of the Braganças, since for D. João the supremacy of the dynasty would lend dignity to his Kingdoms. According to Oliveira Lima, the prolonged residence of D. João in Brazil

“would even constitute a better guarantee of the independence of Portugal than the self-interested support of Great Britain, since the Spanish colonies fighting, albeit desperately, for emancipation, would serve as an excellent mortgage to be sent back to the metropole, which would fully understand that Portugal was trying to expand itself in South America to compensate for what it had lost in the Peninsula.”<sup>22</sup>

The internal and external consequences of this decision were enormous, but beforehand many people celebrated on the streets the rise of the United Kingdom of Brazil. With enthusiasm inverse to that of Marrocos, Luís Gonçalves dos Santos, called *Father Perereca*, left a gushing report about the “spontaneous illumination” on the night of 17 December, that was made everywhere “from the Amazon to the River Platte in all the cities and villages” of Brazil to “thank such a singular and honorific grace”. For the priest, after giving a home to the sovereign, Brazil “asked for and should receive a political status equal to the majesty of the throne, that was established in it...” and the Royal Letter “in one blow undid the political anomaly and the irregular system of the colonial *ancien regime*.”<sup>23</sup> And without knowing how to refer to the former colonists, or perhaps to stress their grandeur, the priest exclaimed: “The Portuguese in

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<sup>22</sup> Oliveira Lima. Op. cit., p.579-80.

<sup>23</sup> Luís Gonçalves dos Santos (Padre Perereca). *Memórias para servir á História do Reino do Brasil*. Belo Horizonte/Itatiaia, São Paulo/Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1982. Book II, p.28-9. These memories were written in Rio de Janeiro and published in 1825 by the Royal Printing House in Lisbon.

America are not inferior in status and rights to the Portuguese from Europe”, since although geographically distant. “They are nevertheless the same people, the same nation identified not only through the indissoluble ties of blood, through the innate valor, loyalty to the sovereign and the identity of religion”, but from now on through the “same privileges, honor and status”.

Father *Perereca* wrote his memories in 1821, after the death of D. Maria I, who was still queen in 1815, and also after the acclamation of D. João in 1818. Maybe for that he referred the Prince as the King D. João VI, although the facts reported in his account had occurred in 1815. Anyway, in reporting the festivities for the United Kingdom, Father *Perereca* praised the glory of “D. João VI! The first in the New World. First to settle, first to congratulate, first to ennoble; first to found a new Monarchy, a new Kingdom, a new Empire”. Luís Gonçalves expresses his enthusiasm with an old Portuguese dream, but he knew that it was unrealistic, in 1821: the foundation of a new Empire with the Portuguese at its head.

It is not possible to discuss here the imperial dream underwent during the Portuguese history between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries<sup>24</sup>. It is enough to remember the projects that had been conceived at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, particularly the D. Rodrigo project to translate the royal family to Brazil. The *Opening of the port*, in 1808, and the commercial and tax advantages conquered by the British, in 1810, expressed the worth of the immense Portuguese colony in America. D. João himself declared upon his arrival in Rio de Janeiro that he intended “to found a new empire”<sup>25</sup>. This was the old Portuguese project, even before the arrival of the Portuguese in America. For a long time Africa had been the target of the imperial dream, strongly marked at this time by the idea of crusade. Regarding to Brazil there are references since the end of the sixteenth century in which America can be considered as the seat of the new Empire, always to be constructed in the future.

But it was in the second half of the eighteenth century, through the enlightened reformers, that the idea began to take shape, firstly formulated in 1737 by the diplomat D. Luís da Cunha in

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<sup>24</sup> It is impossible to quote ~~etc~~ here the vast production about the projects for the foundation and re-foundation of a Portuguese Empire in Africa, in the East and in America, since the forms and meanings of this project were altered and adapted to the different historical conjunctures between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. To cite one example, the most important of them, the writings of Antônio Vieira who, more than anyone else, founded the *quincentistas* and baroque projects in the classic Letter to the Bishop of Japan, André Fernandes, dated 29 April 1659, entitled *Esperança de Portugal, Quinto Império do Mundo* (Hope from Portugal, the Fifth Empire of the World). This letter was based on the inquisition process suffered by Vieira and through this the Jesuit wrote his *História do futuro*, probably concluded in 1667, but only published in 1718. This was followed by his incomplete *Clavis prophetarum*, apotheosis of the messianic and millenarist trilogy begun with the 1659 writings. The Fifth Empire followed the Roman, it would be led by a resurrected D. João IV and under his leadership all Jews, Gentiles and heretics would be converted to Christianity.

<sup>25</sup> Oliveira Lima. Op.cit., p. 56.

his “Instructions to Marco Antonio de Azevedo Coutinho”. The importance of Brazil to the Portuguese Empire was clear at this time, especially following the discovery of gold and diamonds in Minas. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the situation of Portugal with the French troops at the gates, besides the pressure of D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho allied with the British, ended up making the old dream a reality, which at the time seemed more like a disgrace or shame.

In *A utopia do poderoso império*, Maria de Lourdes Vianna Lyra analyzed the foundation of the United Kingdom of Brazil as the “practical result of what had been conceived at the end of the eighteenth century, based on the *new empire*: the coexistence of equal states united by reciprocal interest and by ties of solidarity”. According to Lyra, the historiography on Brazil independence has given little importance to the role played by the historical meaning of the new political condition of Brazil. An aspect that, in her view, should be considered for the discussion of the type and composition of the new state it was intended to build<sup>26</sup>. Nevertheless, my own hypothesis relies less on the continuity of a preconceived imperial project, and more on the dramatic circumstances of that time. In 1815, times were nebulous and destiny uncertain. It was necessary to guarantee that it would be possible and, in this way, raising Brazil to a Kingdom seemed the easiest path to put off the principal decisions or to choose the least worse in the narrow range of options.

The rise of the Count of Barca, the close with the French and the misunderstandings with the British certainly weighed in the balance, whatever for the remain of the court in Rio de Janeiro or the rise of Brazil to a Kingdom. The year of 1815 ended with the festivities celebrating the Kingdom Brazil, and 1816 began promisingly with the arrival of the French Mission. With the arrival of the Braganças and the Portuguese court in Brazil the interest of foreigners for the tropics was increased and stimulated, as we can found in several reports of European travelers, which are still precious sources for study this period<sup>27</sup>.

The French artistic mission can be seen as a great attempt to dignify the new Kingdom, but its political meaning is more evident when we consider that it would have been impossible two years earlier. The new geo-political frame in Europe and the Count of Barca arise, French artists were brought to Brazil, through which the powerful minister intended to create an academy of science, fine arts and letters in Rio de Janeiro. The negotiations for the arrival of the Lebreton

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<sup>26</sup> Maria de Lourdes Viana Lyra. *A utopia do poderoso império*. Rio de Janeiro, Sette Letras, 1994, p.159.

<sup>27</sup> For a vision of the context, see Carlos Oberacker. *Viajantes, naturalistas e artistas estrangeiros*. Sergio Buarque de Holanda (dir.). *História Geral da Civilização Brasileira*. Brasil monárquico. Book II. Volume 1. O processo de emancipação. 9<sup>th</sup> edition. Rio de Janeiro. Bertrand Brasil, 2001.

Mission began, of course, before the foundation of the Kingdom of Brazil since the artists arrived in Rio de Janeiro in January 1816.

The festivities and the arrival of the French was followed by the mourning related to the death of D. Maria I. Sick and lacking any political function since 1792, the queen arrived with the court in Brazil and lived here, according to Father *Perereca*, “always with much relief, every afternoon having her regular coach ride, always being seen by her people”. Even after, the day before her death, on 20 March, the news spread that Her Majesty was only sick. Around a month previously Marrocos had commented with his father on the grave state of health of the queen, which worsened everyday despite the “diligence and care of the doctors with the help of medicine”<sup>28</sup>. A few days later he gave news of the death of the queen and described the desolation of D. João, who “stopped eating and still persists in continuing in tears”.

Father *Perereca* reports in detail on the grandiose funeral ceremonies of D. Maria, worthy of a Queen, and comments briefly:

After we have cried and mourned our much missed Queen, in accordance of the old usage and the customs of the Portuguese nation D. João VI should have soon been acclaimed King of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and the Algarves with all pomp and solemnity; but the piety of His Majesty deferred his august ceremony to a later time, as he does not want to mix the tears which still fall from his eyes with others that have not been crushed by pain and the loss of his august mother; therefore Our Lord *El-Rei* ordered that after the mourning his acclamation would be delayed until when the royal lord would designate it, and whilst this glorious day did not arrive for Brazil, and especially for Rio de Janeiro, which sighed so much to have the honor and glory to be present at the royal act of acclamation of His Most True Majesty, the first such to be held in the New World, we will continue our memories...<sup>29</sup>

For the priest the postponement of the acclamation was the result of grief. However, while the funeral of the queen followed the ritual of royalty, I think that the postponement of the acclamation, unusual in monarchies with an assured legitimate succession, still requires greater research. Although the Prince began to sign official documents as D. João VI shortly after his

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<sup>28</sup> Marrocos, 23 February 1816.

<sup>29</sup> Luis Gonçalves dos Santos. Op.cit., p.66-7.

mother death, it is not easy to understand the reasons for the delay of almost two years for the acclamation ceremony. It must discuss this question.

### 3- The acclamation delayed

Treated as a question of little importance, both by the historiography dedicated to D. João, and by studies about the coming of the royal family to Brazil, the decision to delay the acclamation of D. João lead to an unusual change of protocol. The expression “they made their pains and then their joys as is usual”, used by Spanish and Portuguese chroniclers since the end of the Middle Ages, summarizes the importance of the continuity ritual that involves the funeral of a King and the acclamation of a successor.

Otherwise than Father Perereca said to justify the acclamation delay – the grief for the queen’s death -, the death of a King caused a vacuum that needed to be filled as quickly as possible with the praise of the one who embodied the continuity of the real dignity. According Kantorowicz, an expert in the history of the western monarchy, the King had two bodies, one human, perishable and mortal; the other superior, super-human and continued by the earthly and temporary exercise of something that surpassed him: the royal dignity. The recognition of this dignity took place precisely in the public solemnity that D. João had postponed.

If the pressures were already strong for the return of the court to Portugal, the reaction against the acclamation outside Lisbon, among the realm subject, were greater.. In Portugal, the rise of Brazil to United Kingdom had been already considered as an outrage and the King’s acclamation overseas would be worst. It meant a serious disruption in the Portuguese tradition to acclaim a King without the representation of the three states. Marrocos remarked this point in May 1816, with his usual bitterness:

They tell me that the acclamation has not been made yet, before the deputations from the Kingdoms of Portugal and Algarves arrive, because there is no *Junta* of the three estates: I do not know if this is just for the courts, but it seems to be a well agreed step, since there are no other questions, not to have the acclamation made in the seat of the monarchy. And why not have it done there? *Dicant Paduani.*”<sup>30</sup>

The fact is that the ‘court’ that came with the royal family to America was not representative of the three states of the monarchy on Portuguese soil. The court in Brazil was

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<sup>30</sup> *Apud* Oliveira Lima. Op. cit.; p.583. Marrocos’ letter to this father is dated 28 May 1816.

singular and quite modest. Besides, the prince regent, afterwards King, dialogued only with his closest ministers or even with only one preferred, and was this style of government that allowed him to exercise power in a freer manner. Thus, the resistance in the realm against an acclamation ceremony in Brasil must be considered among the causes of the mentioned delay. Although the postponement gave some time to D. João, the enrootment of the Court in Rio de Janeiro, and the growing interests of many ministers in Brazil as well, like Count of Barca's business in the South, made almost imposible the decision to come back to Lisbon.

It can be argued that the ceremony was dispensable, since D. João had exercised in fact the power since 1799, when he had officially assumed the regency of Portugal and overseas. Nevertheless, in the monarchical liturgy the regent only became King after the death of the last acclaimed sovereign, and for this, in accordance with the *ancient custom*, the new monarch only should be confirmed as king after the traditional rites. Certainly, D. João's dilemma between Portugal and Brasil, as well as his decision to stay in Brazil, led him to an abnormal situation: he was: the legitimate successor, already exercising in fact the power, but for almost two years he had reigned without any traditional confirmation.

The solemnity of the recognition of a King had the function of confirming the non-dissolvable relationship between the head – the King – and the body of the Kingdom, remaking the mystical and sacred character of this union. The postponement of this celebration appeared to indicate the brittle cohesion of this body, divided into two rivaling parts, Portugal and Brazil, the first clamoring for the return of the court and the second imposing itself as the King's preferred place. No matter how informed he was, D. João did not seem to believe that his absence could be provoke the Portuguese to defy his power. D. João would behold no longer the great risks of his choice of America.

Anyway, in 1816 the postponement was able, at least, to quiet the rage on the other side of the Atlantic, mainly because D. João put into play what Oliveira Lima saw as imperialist plans in the south of Brazil. This was to be a form of compensating the loss of Guyana, restored to the French under the Vienna agreements. Actually, the *Rio da Prata* question older and more delicate. Since 1809, the political conflicts in the South involved even the princess Carlota Joaquina, who was opposing to Portuguese control over *Prata's* region, considered by the princess as a part of the Spanish Empire. According to Francisca de Azevedo recent book, rather than a coup against D. João, Carlota was, first of all, absolutely committed to the Spanish<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Francisca L. Nogueira de Azevedo. *Carlota Joaquina na corte do Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro. Civilização Brasileira, 2003, especially Chapter IV.

However, the frame had been changed in 1816. D. Rodrigo had died; Napoleon had been defeated; England had withdrawn from the *Rio da Prata* struggles emancipation wars started there, which resulted in the independent United Provinces of the *Rio da Prata*. Portugal and Spain were once again on peaceful terms due to the marriages of two Portuguese princesses, ably conducted by D. Carlota, with their Spanish uncles: Fernando VII and the Prince D. Carlos. D. João benefitted from the apparent peace to interfere in the quarrels between Buenos Aires and Spain, just intending to reserve for the Portuguese the *Banda Oriental*, the future Uruguay. The victorious invasion of Montevideo in November 1816<sup>32</sup> was enthusiastically commemorated and could have been a good moment for the acclamation of the King. But it did not happen this time.

1817 began with enormous challenges for D. João. In March, a riot blew up in *Pernambuco* and the rebels overcame Recife, the provincial capital. They held the city for three months, establishing a revolutionary government against D. João. The rebellion was caused by the *Pernambuco* discontentment with the centralization of power in Rio, the duties imposed for supply the Court expenses and the slackness of D. João to attend the northern provinces claims. The repression was violent and, after the legalistic win, Bernardo Teixeira, a magistrate of the *Desembargo do Paço* (the higher Court of Justice in the Portuguese Kingdom), was sent from Rio de Janeiro to judge the rebels.

The so called *Pernambuco Revolution* is not, of course, what I intend to discuss here. I just to stress that this rebellion certainly aroused a serious attack against D. João royal authority. Oliveira Lima suggest that the *Pernambuco Revolution* may have been one of the causes of the acclamation postponement in 1817. Instead of Oliveira Viana argument, I prefer to argue that D. João could really benefit his victory in *Pernambuco* to confirm his power publically through a great acclamation ceremony in Rio de Janeiro.

There is an undated *Plan of the orders that are to be carried at the day of the ceremony of the acclamation of d. João*<sup>33</sup>, prepared by Royal Household, previewing the 6 January, and not February, as the day for the festivities. It is not impossible that this plan had been prepared for 1817, when the mourning of one year for the queen's death would be finished, although no

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<sup>32</sup> Cf. J.A. Soares de Souza. O Brasil e o Prata até 1828. *História Geral da Civilização Brasileira*. Brasil monárquico. Book II. Volume 1. O processo de emancipação. 9th edition. Rio de Janeiro. Bertrand Brasil, 2001.

<sup>33</sup> *Plano das ordens que seriam executadas no dia do cerimonial de acclamação de d. João*. Apresenta a descrição de cada momento da acclamação, incluindo desde os atos que seriam praticados por d. João até a posição que cada membro da celebração ocuparia e a função que viria desempenhar. Conjunto documental: Papéis relativos à acclamação, sagração e coroação de dona Maria I, dom João VI, dom Pedro I e dom Pedro II. Arquivo Nacional, Fundo Casa Real e Imperial. Mordomia-mor, códice 569.



Portuguese king had observed such a long grief time before. Even if this date of 6 January had been prevued, the postponement would not have been caused by events in Pernambuco, which only began in March that year. By this turn, *Father Perereca* established a close relationship between the Pernambuco rebellion and the postponement of the acclamation, which he said was prepared for 7 April 1817, though we do not know how he arrived at this date. There is no sources that may confirm it.

Although he had won the Pernambuco riot, D.João was soon challenged in Portugal by a military conspiracy led by Gomes Freire de Andrada. The discontentment with the command of the troops led by British Marshall Beresford, considered a “ridiculous adventurer” by Portuguese soldiers, was the main cause of this new revolt. Besides, the soldiers were impatient with the British command, the abandonment by the King and their wages unpaid, while the British lived in luxury. As in the case in Pernambuco, the insubordination led by Gomes Freire de Andrada deserves at least a comment. The military question in Portugal was a deep rooted problem, mainly because there were many difficulties to enlist the soldiers. Also in Pernambuco it was not easy to enlist men for the royal troops. The insubordination of the men armed to serve the monarchy – in the Portuguese case militarily commanded by an British officer – made very evident the level of displeasure among them, as well the distance between the royal head and the body of the Kingdom.

In July the two rebel movements had been brought under control, although not totally repressed. However, nothing did prevent, four months later, the effusive celebrations upon the arrival of the princess D. Carolina Josefa Leopoldina, archduchess of Austria, to marry the heir D. Pedro. The city was lit up, streets were covered with carpets, the windows of convents were decorated, a “magnificent Roman arch” adorned *Rua Direita*, designed by the French architect Grand-Jean de Montigny. The people took to the streets and foreign representatives participated in the festival days that followed the marriage of D. Pedro and D. Leopoldina in November 1817. If such as grandiose festival was possible, what still continued to justify the postponement of the acclamation?

The year brought another difficulty for D. João: the death, on 21 June, of the Count of Barca, then the Minister and Secretary of the Marine and Overseas Dominions. He was replaced by the Count of Palmela, the Portuguese representative in England and France. Palmela delayed so much his coming to Brazil, so, in fact, the position was occupied came by Tomas Antônio Vila Nova Portugal, judge of the *Paço* Royal Palace. Perhaps the hasty rise of the latter minister in Brazil can explain the decision to hold large wedding festivities for D. Pedro and the following year the long expected acclamation of the King. The details, the grandiosity, and the participation

of French artists in the architecture and decoration of these celebrations seemed to bear the mark of the new minister, but upon whom converged extraordinary power in the final years of the Portuguese court in Brazil.

The turbulent year of 1817 came to an end. The following year began with the publishing of the royal decree finally marking the date of the public acclamation of D. João VI as King of the Kingdoms Brasil, Portugal and the Algarves, of 'Here and Overseas' (*d'Aquém e d'Além-Mar*) in Africa, Lord of Guinea and the Conquest, Navigation and Trade with Ethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India etc. The arrangements mobilized a real "army" of artists, artificers and labors, working for several months. There was a great target to reach: exhibiting the magnificence and the strength of the Portuguese Monarchy.

#### **4 - Finally, the royal Acclamation**

It is possible to establish a relation between the grandiosity of the wedding festivals of D. Pedro, mainly, the acclamation of D. João VI, and the growing power exercised by the new minister of the King, Tomás Antônio Vila Nova Portugal. I think that it was not a simple coincidence, since the Vila Nova's policy attempted to join important dynasties in the restored frame of Europe. The daughters of D. João and D. Carlota married, in 1816, their Bourbons uncles in Spain, one of whom was the actual King; in 1817 D. Pedro married D. Leopoldina of Austria, part of the chess game of intra-dynastic marriages that sought to consolidate alliances and mutual commitments. It was, therefore, a time of confidence in the institutions of royalty.

The unexpected rise of Tomas Antônio Vila Nova Portugal did not make him a lesser minister. Instead, since the middle of 1817, he had mediated the relations between the governors and the Prince. We can see that in his vast correspondence sent to him by the General charged to pacify Pernambuco, Luiz do Rego Barreto, since July 1817<sup>34</sup>. Tomas Antônio Vila Nova Portugal was a staunch conservative: a doctor in Law from the University of Coimbra, he served as judge in the Court of Oporto, in 1800, then in the Appeal Court of Lisbon the following year, and finally, in the *Desembargo do Paço*, in 1807, the highest Court of Portugal realm.

After 1817, he held all the ministerial positions, Interior (*Reino*), Finance, Foreign Affairs, War and, finally, the Marine, thereby managing to accumulate all the ministries of the court in Rio between 1818 and 1821. A convicted absolutist, he guided the repression of the

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<sup>34</sup> These letters were organized and published by Evaldo Cabral de Melo and are published in the *Revista do Instituto Arqueológico, Histórico e Geográfico de Pernambuco*, vol. LII, 1979, pp. 81-215.

Pernambuco rebellion, instructing the Count of Arcos, then the governor of Bahia, the place the prisoners were sent to. He also persecuted all secret societies, especially the freemasons; put together the 1818 decree that prohibited any association or meeting without royal authorization; and was opposed to all and any liberal innovations that could reduce the power of the monarch<sup>35</sup>.

Considering his profile, it is not difficult to understand the value given by Tomas de Vila Nova to the solemnities related to the power of the Portuguese King. Despite being educated and well-read in matters of jurisprudence and the economy, he seems to have been so discreet as the King, avoiding personal pomposity. However he was the father of the great Acclamation ceremony, in 1818. It was a grandiose spectacle, although useless, perhaps, considering the weakness of the Bragantine dynasty amidst the European great kingdoms at this time.

Oliveira Lima, in his chapter related to the solemnities in court, jokes about the festivities occurred before the arrival of Archduchess Leopoldina in Rio de Janeiro. According to the author, it was only “little by little that the émigré court remade its ambient of etiquette”<sup>36</sup>. He displeases, for instance, the celebrations brought forward the marriage between the Princess Maria Tereza with D. Pedro Carlos de Bourbon, Prince of Spain, in 1810. He follows Luccock’s description, stressing the bad taste of the scenario that had been arranged, especially related to the performance of the drama *Triunfo da América* (The Triumph of America), concluding that “they must have produced a mixed sensation of a circus group and a German nuptial march”. He then finishes, without any mercy: “The culmination of the burlesque, however, impacted on the commemoration of the wedding, celebrated months later, which certainly produced the Fluminense carnival”. The author is specifically referring to the creator of the allegorical float of the merchants, in which “there figured a hill crowned by the statue of America in an arch, with a bow, headdress and skirt with plumes, surrounded by Indians, quadrupeds and birds approaching among the herbs and flowers, from where fountains of water shot out, watering the square”.

For the marriage of D. Pedro the scenario had quite literally changed. In fact, before the marriage, when Brazil became a Kingdom, Indians “were an obligatory part of the festival and were also an essential part of national symbolism”, but during the festivities this time, “the country could be seen to take off the headdress and the feather skirt and put on the crown and mantle with which the prince regent was toasted”<sup>37</sup>. But no celebration was equal to the magnificence of the festivities following the acclamation of D. João VI on 6 February 1818. Supported by French artists, the decoration was stripped of native traces and reflected the

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<sup>35</sup> Cf. Lucia Bastos Pereira das Neves. Tomás Antônio Vila Nova Portugal. *Dicionário do Brasil Imperial*, p.700-1.

<sup>36</sup> Oliveira Lima. Op.cit., p. 605.

<sup>37</sup> Idem, ibdem, p.606-8.

grandeur of the occasion. Finally, the King received publically the blessing of the throne which he already occupied. It can actually be said in a figurative sense that until that moment he had been King without the coronation of his royal dignity.

I said “in a figurative sense” because neither D. João nor the Portuguese Kings who preceded him were crowned. In another work I have studied some interpretations on the absence of the unction and coronation rites in the Portuguese royal acclamation. At that time, I was interested in the relationship established between the coronation and the consecration by the Portuguese historians concerned with the theme. Succinctly, it can be said the crown had in the *alevantamento* or acclamation ceremonies of the Portuguese King, but not in the *coronation*. The crown played a very important role in the ritual, but only symbolic. According to José Mattoso, *crown* also became a synonym of ‘Kingdom’ or “royal household” and the main regal attribute came to be the scepter, the true royal insignia of acclamation ceremonies<sup>38</sup>.

This kind of ritual was still usual when the acclamation of D. João VI took place in Rio de Janeiro. The reproduction of some aspects present in the self-coronation of Napoleon in 1804 by the French artists who painted the ceremony in Rio de Janeiro, clearly show us how contingent the staging of tradition can be. Although in overseas, the solemnity sought to maintain the rigid protocol of celebration, in order to exhibit the social hierarchies and to stress the importance of ritual for the royalty. The already mentioned *Plan of the orders that are to be carried out on the day of the ceremony of the acclamation of d. João* details each step of the ceremony and the meticulous descriptions available do not leave any doubts about how important the occasion was.

The Acclamation date was specially negotiated with the papacy: the chosen day was that of the *Wounds of Christ* – when pain and death can be signs of redemption; mages showing “America letting go of the headdress and in the act of putting the Royal Crown on its head”, passive, loyal and obedient, meant that the exoticism had been ordered by the Portuguese monarchy; Africa, by this turn, offered its wealth to the grandeur of the United Kingdom of Portugal and Brazil. The guarantee that the European culture would prevail over the native one

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<sup>38</sup> For an analysis of the Portuguese historiographical debate about the question, see Jacqueline Hermann. *No reino do Desejado. A construção do sebastianismo em Portugal, séculos XVI-XVII*. São Paulo, Companhia das Letras, 1998, especially Chapter 3. The principal texts about the consecration of Portuguese Kings are by Antônio Brásio. O problema da sagração dos monarcas portugueses. *Anais da Academia Portuguesa de História*, volume 12, 2<sup>nd</sup> Series, Lisbon, 1962, and Paulo Merêa. Sobre a aclamação dos nossos reis. *Revista Portuguesa de História*. Tomo X. Separata. Coimbra, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Coimbra, 1962. The cited text from José Mattoso is A coroação dos primeiros reis de Portugal. Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (orgs.). *A memória da nação*. Lisbon, Sá da Costa, 1991.

was safe, by charging the architect Grandjean de Montigny, the painter Jean-Baptiste Debret and the sculptor Auguste-Marie Taunay to prepare the whole festival.

There are two principal narratives of the acclamation ceremony: one by Father *Perereca* in his encomiastic memoirs, and the other written in 1818 by the Rio de Janeiro *intendente* (mayor and police chief) at the time, Bernardo Avellino Ferreira e Souza<sup>39</sup>.

Both stressed the wealth and splendor of the festivities. The *Paço* was transformed into an imperial square in which Montigny erected a temple of *Minerva*, which as well as the statute of the Goddess housed another of D. João, while a triumphal arch was designed by Debret and built by Taunay. Each side of the arch had Corinthian columns with statues of *Minerva* and *Ceres*, representing the wisdom and prudence of the King, as well as the abundance of the land. On the right arch were enacted, the landing of D. João, being welcomed by America and receiving the keys of the city, while on the left the King received the homage of the Arts and Commerce in recognition of the favors ~~of~~ given by D. João, entitled *Liberator of Commerce*. In the middle of the square was an obelisk more than one hundred hands high “in imitations of the needles of Egypt” which “pretended to be granite”.

The ceremony started in the *Paço* with the descent of the King to the veranda of the palace specially designed by Debret for the occasion. The royal balcony took up the entire front of the palace and ended at the atrium of the Royal Chapel, where the King, with the Prince D. Miguel and Prince Pedro ahead of him, accompanied by the grandees of the Kingdom, bishops and officers, all with their insignias, ministers and the secretary of state of the Kingdom. When D. João came onto the veranda – dressed in the royal mantle of red velvet, embroidered in gold, and wearing on his head a *hat* with white feathers – the minstrels played the trumpets and drums, receiving cheers and applauses from the people who were watching from the street. The King went to the royal seat where he received in his right hand the gold scepter and a rich golden tray from the hands of the Viscount of Rio Seco.

This obeyed a rigorous ritual in which the secretary of state, Tomás Antônio Vila Nova Portugal authorized the entrance of the *desembargador* of the *Paço*, who announced: *Hark, Hark, Hark, Attend to me!* After reciting a ‘beautiful prayer’ and then retiring, the religious part of the solemnity took place, when the bishop-grand chaplain received from the master of ceremonies of

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<sup>39</sup> Luís Gonçalves dos Santos. Op.cit., pp. 151-179, and Bernardo Avellino Ferreira e Souza. *Relação dos festejos, que á feliz acclamação do muito alto, muito poderoso, e fidelissimo Senhor D. João VI. Rei do United Kingdom de Portugal, Brasil e Algarves Na noite de indelevel, e faustissimo dia 6 de fevereiro, e nas duas subsequentes, com tanta cordialidade, como respeito votarão os Habitantes do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro. In the Typographia Real, 1818.

the Royal Chapel the open missal with a silver crucifix on top. The two of these were placed on a table beside the King. At the end of the ceremony, the royal ensign cried out: *Royal, Royal, Royal, by the Most High, and the Most Powerful King D. João VI Our Lord*, which was repeated by everyone at the same time as the musical instruments were sounded.

The festivities spread through the streets, with another important center being Campo de Santana. A small wooden palace was erected to house the King and the royal family and it was transformed into the center of the second day of festivities, reserved for popular manifestations. Battalions of soldiers paraded past, followed by dancers from the Royal Theater, as well as a bull run. On 8 February the royal family and the Sovereign returned to the small palace from where they watched fireworks, the culminating point was the expression *Viva El Rei* lighting up the sky, while the King received the ceremony of the kissing of hands.

In addition to the temple, arches, palaces and fireworks, the lighting was a chapter apart, highlighted by all the chroniclers. In Campo de Santana, Oliveira Lima mentioned 102 luminous pyramids with enough brightness and taste to “make one think of the Tulherias and the Elysium Fields when lit up”. There was a serious dispute between the different corporations, districts and individuals to prepare lights, with one house alone being decorated with six thousand lamps!

The exuberance of the festivities sought to match the goodwill of the King who granted pardons to various of those accused in the 1817 insurrections in Pernambuco, except to the leaders, as well as the privilege of retirement and a pension to those who had served in the City Council and other positions. He also granted the Council of Rio de Janeiro the position of *Senhoria*, “which as well as being the Capital of the United Kingdom of Brazil, had the honor to watch My Glorious Coronation...”.

I cannot let the use of the expression *coronation* by D. João related to his own acclamation pass by without comment. In fact, during the whole ritual, not only did no crown appear, but D. João appeared at the ceremony with a hat and greeted the people with it. As I has already been said, by calling the Acclamation solemnity as a *coronation*, historians and chroniclers confused themselves. Even in detailed accounts, such as that of Father *Perereca*, we can find expressions such as D. João’s “lifting of the crown”, although in his memories the crowning of the King is not mentioned once. It is actually Father Perereca who describes narrates the path followed by El-Rei from the veranda to the Royal Chapel, each step accompanied by applause, “which His Majesty benignly received with affability, the smile, the happiness in his royal face, *taKing off his hat* at the different arches through which he passed...” When he

appeared before the people, he took off “with tenderness and great majesty his hat three times, many other times greeting his people, inclining his head somewhat.”<sup>40</sup>

Debret, who produced a number of paintings of the acclamation, did not portray D. João with a crown at any time, since

“the sovereign only used his full dress uniform on the day of his acclamation, though without a crown due to the custom that had been established since the death of D. Sebastião in Africa in 1580. D. Sebastião, they say, was brought up to heaven with the crown on his head and would return it again to Lisbon. For this reason, it was placed on the throne alongside D. João VI...”<sup>41</sup>.

Indeed, not even D. Sebastião was crowned – in addition to having disappeared in 1578 -, and despite having lent his name to a messianic phenomenon with a long life, as we can see through some Marrocos comments about Sebastianism referred the long wait for the return of D. João VI to Portugal. The absence of the coronation *strictu sensu* did not diminish the sacred character of the monarchy and its representatives. As the historian José Mattoso said, nothing prevented the King from referring to his power over the royal crown, even if he did not actually use it, as happened with D. João VI. But this only seems to be a detail: even without a crown, America now had its King.

## 5 - Back to the Atlantic

The first sovereign acclaimed in America, the King considered to be withdrawn and to pay little attention to the urgencies of his time, waited long to be officially enthroned. On the other hand, when he did this, he did not economize on the ritualization, which was copied in various places in Brazil for up to eight months. The organizers of the royal confirmation with all the possible pomp and circumstance did not neglect the symbolic weight of each step.

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<sup>40</sup> Luis Gonçalves dos Santos. Op. cit., p. 162-3.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Jean-Baptiste Debret. *Viagem pitoresca e histórica ao Brasil*. São Paulo, Martins Fontes, 1975. Angela Miranda Cardoso refers to the *tradition* of this interpretation inaugurated by Debret and continued by John Armitage, Pedro Calmon, Octavio Tarquino and Lilia Schwartz, with the latter having corrected it in a later work. The fantasy of this version probably got more complex over time and, according to one of its versions, the crown was said to have been symbolically lost in North Africa “messianically waiting for the return of the young monarch so that once again he could put it on.” Cf. Do sentido do estudo das cerimônias de entronização brasileiras. István Jancsó (org.). *Brasil: formação do Estado e da Nação*. São Paulo, Hucite; Ed. Unijuí; Fapesp, 2003, p.569.

The expenses for the festivities were paid for by all those who understood the importance of D. João for the defense of Brazilian interests. The Board of Trade was responsible for the construction of a triumphal arch, while the Senate of the Council financed the temple and part of the elite supplied the lighting, as well as the personal contributions of various individuals to the grandeur of the festivities.

The *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro*, the first newspaper in Brazil, founded in 1808, dedicated a special edition to the “glorious act of the Acclamation of Dom JOÃO SEXTO, Our August Sovereign, and Model of the Monarchs of the Universe”, describing the solemnities in great detail<sup>42</sup>. Marrocos, with his usual bad humor, worsened by the maladies of the tropics, sent his father on 24 February 1818 some copies of the *Gazeta*, warning

“that within them there is a want of preciseness and many lies, which I cannot excuse, like narrating with enthusiasm things that did not exist, or giving value to pettiness, falling into absurdities, or even into ridiculousness, of not publishing facts and circumstances that are even more essential in that Act.<sup>43</sup>”

Expecting the return of the King to Lisbon, like the Sebastianists, Marrocos demonstrated his annoyance with the direction of events. A man close to the Minister Tomas Antônio Vila Nova, he still did not get enthusiastic about the ceremony: “I will feel very sorry not to be present at this Act, for not seeing it, but as well as a decent comfort being missing for this, it is probable that I will find myself at home”, a way of escaping the effervescence of the streets and the “fatigue that has already been started”.

Unlike D. João, it cost Marrocos to adapt himself to the tropics. He described in long passages the fevers that laid him low for days, and sometimes for weeks, and politically he remained loyal to the principles of the hierarchy that subordinated Brazil to Portugal. He accompanied from a distance what was happening on the other side of the Atlantic, where the insistence for the King to return did not cease and the idea of the separation of Portugal and Brazil began to spring up. More than ever the feeling of abandonment was immense, because the old metropole, in his view, had become a colony of Brazil. According to Oliveira Lima there was an important movement of troops during the festivities in Rio “with the fear that there would be

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<sup>42</sup> *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro*, 10 February 1818.

<sup>43</sup> Marrocos, letter dated 24 February 1818.



some demonstration of discontent by the Portuguese element for the acclamation having taken place in Brazil”<sup>44</sup>.

The same year as the acclamation, an anonymous letter complained about the inversion of the colonial relationship “in relation to trade, professions, factories, arts and agriculture” and demanded that the Portuguese be given the same treatment conferred on those from Brazil:

“...and are we not by chance vassals of Your Majesty to be treated in the same way that Brazilians are now? How happy are they and us in such disgrace? Your Majesty could very well help us, otherwise in a while Your Majesty will be King of a beggared and disgraced People”<sup>45</sup>

Oliveira Lima analyzes the diverging opinions of the two most important councilors of D. João VI, the Count of Palmela and the Minister Vila Nova, in these times of uncertainty. The first dreamed of the English model of monarchy, insisting that the King return to the seat of the old court. Vila Nova defended the opposite: D. João should stay in Brazil, since “once disunited the American Kingdom would no longer be linked to Europe”.<sup>46</sup> The minister continued to believe that the King could show the world from America the force of absolutism and monarchical grandeur. The odes prepared at this time, many of them before the acclamation, like the one cited at the opening of this paper, seem deaf to the signs that were coming across the Atlantic and melancholically acclaimed:

“If you see someday what you now see,  
You Foreigners, confess sincerely  
Which Sovereign, which People full of grace  
Would compare with This?  
Night turns into day; the city is  
A luminous clarion of immense lights  
Crackling fire echoes through the air,  
Everything breathes joy.”<sup>47</sup>”

After choosing the right moment, after subverting the tradition, D. João VI was able for a short time to take advantage of the grandeur of power that he had finally solemnly affirmed. He returned to Portugal under as much pressure as when he had arrived in Brazil. Enthroned in America, he returned to Portugal to enact, against his will, a constitution. Once again he arrived late to the best part of the party.

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<sup>44</sup> Oliveira Lima, p. 609.

<sup>45</sup> “Carta de hum fiel vassalo a El-Rei D. João VI relatando o estado do reino de Portugal sob o governo regencial e pedindo a volta de S.M.” apud Iara Lis Carvalho de Souza. *Patria Coroada*. O Brasil como corpo político autônomo 1780-1831. São Paulo, Unesp, 1999, p.58

<sup>46</sup> Idem, p.649-50.

<sup>47</sup> Ode anônima, *apud* Luiz Gonçalves dos Santos. *Op.cit.*, p.181.

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