

RHETORIC AND RIOT IN RIO DE JANEIRO, 1827-1831

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## ABSTRACT

WILLIAM M. WISSER: Rhetoric and Rio in Rio de Janeiro, 1827-1831

(Under the direction of John Charles Chasteen)

This dissertation examines the effect of the new and powerful newspaper corps on the rapidly deteriorating political environment in Rio de Janeiro in the waning years of the First Empire (1822-1831). The dissertation traces the lives of the major newspaper editors and attempts to show the impact their periodicals had on the political turmoil that characterized the last years of Emperor Pedro I's rule. Through an analysis of every extant newspaper originally published in Rio de Janeiro from 1827-1831, this dissertation concludes that editors had a significant role in events by providing a new and powerful forum for political debates outside of the strict confines of the state. The findings of this dissertation challenge the impression that the presence of a European monarch ensured Brazil's stability and cohesion, especially in the pivotal First Empire. The newspapers in Rio de Janeiro played a defining role in the direction of the state and encouraged an aware populace to defend the hitherto undefined nation.

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## INTRODUCTION

Pedro I, Brazil's First Emperor, left the troubled city of Rio de Janeiro for the relative calm of the neighboring province of Minas Gerais in late December, 1830. Instead of the expected throngs of well-wishers, groups of angry Brazilians met Pedro to protest the death of a popular liberal newspaper editor who was allegedly killed at the behest of a government official. Pedro responded to his critics in characteristically brash style. The proclamation he gave on 22 February 1831 singled out the cadre of liberal opposition editors in the capital city of Rio de Janeiro who "write without disguise and excite the people to federation."<sup>1</sup>

The arrival of the proclamation on the streets of Rio set the city on fire. Supporters of the emperor, mostly members of the Portuguese merchant community, saw it as a call to arms to defend their beleaguered leader from the attacks of the opposition. Members of the opposition, mostly Brazilian urban youths, interpreted the proclamation as the first shot in the battle for control of the empire. The two sides met on the streets of Rio over the three nights of 13-15 March 1831. The opposition groups, led by the two most vocal newspaper editors, were repulsed with heavy casualties by the better-armed and better-organized Portuguese combatants. During what would be later called the riot of the Nights of the Broken Bottles (*Noites das Garrafadas*), the loudest shouts were for death to the editor of the *República*, the most vociferous of the opposition newspapers. Bookstores and typographers were attacked,

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<sup>1</sup>See appendix 1 for the full text of the proclamation.



and the editor of the *Aurora Fluminense*, a moderate opposition newspaper, spent a harrowing night in his house surrounded by a large and angry mob of Portuguese rioters. The riot finally ended with the arrests of several Brazilians, including pro-Brazilian members of Pedro's army.

A tenuous peace reigned over Rio in the ensuing weeks, even though each night saw sporadic battles between Brazilians and Portuguese. The real war was being waged in the press. Editors inflamed readers and listeners with their competing interpretations of the riot and refused to let passions calm. The opposition editors used their papers as pulpits to demand the emperor bow to the wishes of the emboldened people. Refusing to compromise, the emperor chose exile and abdicated the throne in favor of his five-year-old son on 7 April 1831.

Historians have examined the end of Brazil's First Empire since John Armitage wrote the *History of Brazil* in 1834. Their arguments concerning the downfall of the emperor vary from blaming Pedro's temperament or claiming it was the emperor's willful choice to abdicate to finding fault in a series of destabilizing events that turned the legislature and the press against the empire.<sup>2</sup> They all agree that dissent in Rio de Janeiro ensured Pedro was unable to continue ruling in the manner he was accustomed. Instead of compromising, the emperor abdicated. Woefully absent in these explanations is any discussion of the role of the common people of Rio de Janeiro in shaping the political fortunes of the young nation.

Historians past and present see the political culture of Rio as shaped by the powerful to

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<sup>2</sup>For a sampling of works that treat the end of Brazil's First Empire, see Emilia Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories*, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1985). Roderick Barman, *Brazil: The Forging of a Nation*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988). Neill Macaulay, *Dom Pedro: The Struggle for Liberty in Brazil and Portugal, 1798-1834*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986). Gladys Sabina Ribeiro, *A Liberdade em Construção: Identidade Nacional e Conflitos Antilusitanos no Primeiro Reinado*, (Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumará, 2002).

benefit those in power (or who wish to be). One reason for historians' focus on powerful political leaders is the dearth of sources to uncover the voices of the weak. Rio de Janeiro was an oral community where almost half of the population was enslaved. The fragmentary and indirect records left behind are hard to find and harder to decipher.

In this dissertation, newspapers provide the sources to understand the mentalities and motivations of the nameless and faceless public. Research into the explosion of the press in late First Empire Rio de Janeiro helps shed light on what was important to common residents of Rio de Janeiro. What was worth writing the editor about? What were the topics that were debated on street corners, in bars, and in the homes? What ideas motivated people to act? The findings of this dissertation challenge the idea that the people did not matter in the course of political events. Newspapers created an active public that clamored for an increased role in the functioning of the state and that, in turn, used the newspapers to effect political change.

Political periodicals had a two-fold role in creating an active public. First, they provided the crucial forum that allowed for the discussion of political ideas outside the palace and legislature and created an outlet for popular protest. National politics and the role of the people in the foundation and perpetuation of the state became public issues debated on the streets, in the homes, and especially in the press. By involving the populace in the affairs of the state, the political periodical press transformed the political culture of Rio in the First Empire and became a major component of the effort to define the political trajectory of the young nation. Second, the newspaper editors guided public opinion away from the traditional principles of government on which Pedro based the empire of Brazil. Editors reinterpreted the legitimacy of the Emperor, thereby threatening the foundation of the nation.

Editors provided the interpretation and newspapers provided the means for the public to challenge the state. Pedro was neither willing nor able to answer that challenge.

Newspapers and editors had an indirect effect on the downfall of Brazil's First Empire. The editors did not "break" a story that brought down the emperor. No individual story or even newspaper led directly to Pedro's abdication. Rather, newspaper editors helped widen the public sphere to include actors unaccustomed to the functioning of the state. In late 1820s Brazil, this widening of the public sphere had a great effect. People on the streets and in the bars were talking about politics. The more they read about politics, the more they debated political issues outside of the traditional confines of the legislature or the court. A more active and knowledgeable populace was able to question the direction of the nation through the new and powerful medium of the press. Newspapers provided both the weapon and the ammunition for a newly emboldened public to wage political warfare.

Historians have long looked to newspapers to help explain the turmoil and strife of the end of the First Empire. In 1834 John Armitage justified his focus on the newspapers by writing "in Brazil, where no standard literature has hitherto had existence, and where the political journals form almost the only vehicle of information, the influence [of newspapers] is even more powerful" than in Europe.<sup>3</sup> In 1877 the historian J. D. da Cruz Lima even went so far as to argue "the abdication of the Emperor was a necessary consequence of the licentiousness of the liberty of the press, principally in Rio de Janeiro."<sup>4</sup> Modern historians have steered clear of such ringing absolutes, but most current studies acknowledge the

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<sup>3</sup>John Armitage, *The History of Brazil*, (NY: AMS Press, 1970 [1836]), II, 2.

<sup>4</sup>José Dias da Cruz Lima, *Refutação do Livro O Primeiro Reinado*, (Rio de Janeiro: Typ. Universal, 1877), 141.

importance of newspapers as source material to help explain the rapid decline in Pedro's popularity and the rise in street tensions at the end of the First Empire.<sup>5</sup>

While modern scholars have looked to newspapers to help explain the political tension of the end of the First Empire, their analyses have been limited by their approach to newspapers; they see newspapers only as a source of information. Jeremy Popkin's impression of French historiography on the same general period holds true for Brazil. He argues that too often in cultural history newspapers are relegated to the status of a mere source. He suggests that we should not see newspapers only as "purveyors of information and ideology—although the importance of these roles should never be underestimated—but also as important sites for the construction of social and cultural identities and as an important form of literature."<sup>6</sup> Recently, scholars of Brazil and Latin America as a whole have begun to see that newspapers can be used to show shifts in political currents beyond an edition or two.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, newspapers can elucidate long-running cultural, social, and political

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<sup>5</sup>The availability and accessibility of newspapers makes them obvious primary source material for the First Empire. Indeed, it is difficult to find a recent analysis of the First Empire that does not rely to some extent on the writings of Rio de Janeiro editors. See for example Emilia Viotta da Costa's chapter on Liberalism where she uses individual editors to explain political positions in the newly independent Empire. Da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*. While Roderick Barman relies mostly on parliamentary records, personal letters, and official documents, he had to admit "if the Chamber of Deputies provided the focus and was the prime mover for the growing opposition, the process of politicization was also dependent upon the reemergence of a national press." Barman, *Brazil: The Forging of a Nation*, 152. Neill Macaulay focuses much of his discussion of Pedro's abdication on the writings and actions of the two most visible liberal editors, Antonio Borges da Fonseca and Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga. Macaulay, *Dom Pedro*. Finally, Gladys Sabina Ribeiro, while focusing her analysis on role of immigrants in the urban turmoil of the late First Empire, relies heavily on nativist arguments in the newspapers to recreate early nineteenth-century economic, social, and racial sentiments. Ribeiro, *A Liberdade em Construção*.

<sup>6</sup>Jeremy D. Popkin, *Press, Revolution, and Social Identities in France, 1830-1835*, (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 9.

<sup>7</sup>Several recent provocative works by Brazilian scholars on the early history of the press have transcended the use of newspapers as sources. While Nelson Werneck Sodré's *História da Imprensa no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: MAUAD, 1998) remains the classic macroscopic approach to the Brazilian press, several new analyses have emerged focusing on individual editors, specific newspaper titles, or limited periods. For example, Isabel Lustosa has produced an exhaustive look at the first explosion of the press during the independence period of 1821-1822. Isabel Lustosa, *Insultos Impressos: A Guerra dos Jornalistas na Independência, 1821-1823*, (São

patterns.<sup>8</sup> Consequently, newspapers are seen more than ever as worthy of intense historical scrutiny.

Examining the newspapers of First Empire Brazil as both source and subject allows for a closer examination of the role of newspapers in the downfall of Pedro's reign. While others have certainly argued that newspapers played a role in the political turmoil and urban strife of the end of the First Empire, that role has never been satisfactorily explained. The missing ingredient is the role the newspapers played in creating and fostering an increasingly active populace. This dissertation connects the threads of the current historiography on the late First Empire by uncovering the role that newspapers and editors played in providing a forum for public debate outside the traditional confines of the state and how the press helped to create an active public.

Brazil provides a special case for the investigation of the role that newspapers played in political and social events. Brazil did not have its own printing press until the Prince Regent Dom João arrived in 1808. The lack of a printing press, and, consequently, newspapers, set Brazil apart from other New World colonies. Spanish colonialists were publishing as early as 1539 in Mexico and 1584 in Peru, and the English colonies to the north

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Paulo: Editora Schwarz, 2000). Marco Morel has played a significant role in the recent surge in newspaper analyses. Besides his biography of a liberal revolutionary editor, Cipriano Barata, he recently published a work on the entirety of the nineteenth-century Brazilian press. Marco Morel, *Cipriano Barata na Sentinela da Liberdade*, (Salvador: Academica de Letras da Bahia, 2001); Marco Morel and Mariana Monteiro de Barros, *Palavra, Imagem, e Poder: O Surgimento da Imprensa no Brasil do Século XIX*, (Rio de Janeiro: DP&A Editoria Ltda., 2003). For recent works on the press in Latin America outside of Brazil, see Paula Alonso, ed., *Construcciones Impresas: Panfletos, diarios y revistas en la formación de los estados nacionales en América Latina, 1820-1920*, (Buenos Aires: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2004); Laura Suárez de la Torre, ed., *Construtores de un Cambio Cultural: Impensores-Editores y Libreros en la Ciudad de México*, (Mexico: Instituto Mora, 2003); and Fernando Unzueta, "Periodicos y formación nacional: Bolivia en sus primeros años," *Latin American Research Review*, 35 no. 2 (2000).

<sup>8</sup>See Jakšić's Introduction where he argues that the rise in number and importance of newspapers in early nineteenth-century Latin America was a "component of larger transformations brought about by the age of Atlantic revolutions." Iván Jakšić, ed., *The Political Power of the Word: Press and Oratory in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2002), 1.

could boast of their own newspapers by 1650.<sup>9</sup> While the lack of a large missionary effort in Brazil precluded the initial need for a printing press to aid in conversion, the Portuguese authorities soon realized that keeping the press out of Brazil was a vital component of their effort to keep their most profitable colony within the colonial system.<sup>10</sup> Several industrious Portuguese emigrés tried to establish printing presses in Brazil before the nineteenth century, but in every case the Portuguese colonial authorities forcibly ended the venture.<sup>11</sup>

One of the first decrees of the Prince Regent Dom João when he arrived in Rio de Janeiro was to establish a printing press. Running a court in the early nineteenth century required reams of official pronouncements, decrees, and laws. João clearly understood the need for a press, and he made sure the machine and its necessary boxes of type were included on one of the Portuguese vessels that fled Lisbon ahead of Napoleon's armies. The arrival of the machinery did not lead immediately to a flourishing free press, however. From the arrival of the printing press in 1808 to independence in 1821, only a few newspapers appeared throughout Brazil. Strict censorship during João's reign ensured those newspapers did not present unsanctioned or independent text. During the independence period of 1821-

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<sup>9</sup>Rebecca Earle, "The Role of Print in the South American Wars of Independence," Iván Jaksic, ed., *The Political Power of the Word: Press and Oratory in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, (London: Institute of Latin American Studies, 2002), 23.

<sup>10</sup>Nelson Werneck Sodré argues convincingly the lack of printing presses had much to do with the state of Brazilian indigenous peoples at the time of contact. Catholic missionaries usually brought the mechanics of the press with them to aid in translation and conversion. Portuguese missionaries did not find concentrated large numbers of indigenous in Brazil (except in the misiones province on the Argentine border). The loose organization and far-flung villages of the indigenous peoples did not allow for mass conversion or education. Besides, the Portuguese government under the Marquis de Pombal excluded the Jesuit order (the most numerous missionaries in Brazil) from both the metropolis and the colony by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Sodré, *Historia da Imprensa*, 10.

<sup>11</sup>There were two early attempts at establishing a printing press in Brazil in the colonial period: one in Recife in 1706 and one in Rio de Janeiro in 1747. Both were dismantled after printing a few works. Nelson Werneck Sodré, *Historia da Imprensa no Brasil*, 17; Lawrence Hallewell, *Books in Brazil: A History of the Publishing Trade*, (Methuen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1982), 12; Charles Boxer, *The Golden Age of Brazil, 1695-1750: Growing Pains of a Colonial Society*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), 315, and Charles Boxer, *O Império Colonial Portugues (1415-1825)*, (Lisboa: Edições 70, 1981), 187-188.

1822, the number of titles increased dramatically but then decreased just as rapidly soon after the constitutional assembly was dissolved in 1823.<sup>12</sup> Throughout the rest of the 1820s, the number of newspapers steadily increased.<sup>13</sup> By 1830, Brazilians could boast of fifty-four newspapers, with sixteen in Rio alone.<sup>14</sup> This increase in the number of titles did not go unnoticed at the time. The eyewitness Robert Walsh wrote “it is hardly possible to conceive that twenty years ago there was not a single newspaper allowed in a country where there are thirteen periodicals published, and universally circulated and read, in one city alone.”<sup>15</sup> Newspaper editors themselves consistently remarked on the increase in newspaper titles and the perceived positive implications of that increase. In a comment common to proponents of the power of print, the editor of the *Aurora Fluminense* wrote: “Today we count in Brazil fifty-four periodicals, [when] ten years ago we only had the poor *Gazeta do Rio de Janeiro* that regularly gave us health updates on the Princes of Europe.”<sup>16</sup>

Opportunities for political expression before 1827, excluding the brief independence period, were severely limited both by censorship and, at the same time, by the lack of

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<sup>12</sup>Isabel Lustosa, *Insultos Impressos*, 407-420. See also Isabel Lustosa, *O Nascimento da Imprensa Brasileira*. (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor Ltda, 2003) and E. Barbosa Lima Sobrinho, “A Imprensa na Independência,” *História da Independência do Brasil*. José Montello ed. (Rio de Janeiro: A Casa do Livro, 1972).

<sup>13</sup>See appendix 2 for the number of newspapers broken down by year. Marcello and Cybelle de Ipanema count 29 periodicals throughout Brazil in 1822. By the end of 1831, there were 150. Marcello de Ipanema, and Cybelle de Ipanema, *Imprensa Fluminense: Ensaio e Trajetos*, (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto de Comunicação Ipanema, 1984), 7, 10. According to the holdings of the Biblioteca Nacional, thirty-six newspapers published at least one edition between 1824 and 1830. In 1831, thirty-five new newspapers began publishing. *Catálogo de Periódicos Brasileiros Microfilmados*, (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, 1994).

<sup>14</sup>Sodré, *História da Imprensa*, 135. Sodré most likely came at his number from an article in *O Brasileiro Imparcial* 18 December 1830 #102. The eyewitness Bosche counted 21 newspapers in Rio in early 1830. Eduardo Theodoro Bosche, “Quadros Alternados” *Revista Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro* 83 (1918), 233. See also Gondin da Fonseca, *Biografia do Jornalismo Carioca*, (Quaresma Editoria, Rio de Janeiro: 1941).

<sup>15</sup>Rev. Robert Walsh, *Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829*, (Boston: Richardson et al, 1831), 97-98.

<sup>16</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 26 November 1830, #417.

avenues of expression. The king, and then the emperor after independence, was able to maintain his administration without fear of organized public dissent and challenge. The rise of a viable and lasting corpus of political periodicals provided the weapons to challenge the administration, and the editors provided the ammunition.

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This dissertation takes both a synchronic and diachronic approach to print culture at the end of the First Empire. The first four chapters cover the same temporal ground (1827-1829), but from separate thematic viewpoints. The last two chapters pick up the story in early 1830 and continue until the aftermath of the riot of the Nights of the Broken Bottles. Chapter I, “Newspapers, Editors, and Readers” explores the three main components of early nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro’s print culture. The examination of the world of print provides texture to the analysis that follows and begins to explain the vital role that newspapers played in late First Empire political discussions.

Chapter II, “The ‘Absolutism of Opinion’: Newspaper Editors and the Creation of an Active Public,” takes an in-depth look at the press: its topics, letters to the editors, and the editors’ reasons for writing. In particular, the chapter focuses on the liberty of the press, the key element to the ability of the press to wield power in late First Empire Brazil. The chapter follows the many twists and turns of a case of libel as it navigated numerous editions of many different newspapers and the variegated paths of the imperial justice system. The court



case details the relationship the reading public had with the political periodical press and how the editors consistently tried to cultivate an active public.

Chapter III, “Pedro, the Press, and Popular Sovereignty,” examines how the press challenged the emperor’s system of governing. Pedro I ruled in the style of late medieval hereditary monarchs. The state was represented by his person, in theory and in practice. This government style presupposed that he started the nation, and the nation continued to exist through his continued presence in it. The conservatives reinforced Pedro’s role in the state through their discussion of civic rituals, legislative decrees, and the actions of Pedro himself. In time, the opposition editors began to contest this meaning and vision of the state. They increasingly diminished Pedro’s importance in favor of a larger role for the people. While others in Brazil believed this before, it was the expanding medium of print that made the editors’ message heard. The one aspect not taken into account by Pedro’s style of governing was the press, and there was a reason the emperor constantly railed against its abuses. He could not control the press; therefore, it existed outside of his concept of monarchy.

Chapter IV, “The Battle for Control of the Passive Public: First Empire Rio de Janeiro’s Civic Rituals,” looks at the way the press reported and interpreted the three main civic holidays of late First Empire Rio de Janeiro (25 March, 7 September, and 12 October). A close reading of both the conservative and liberal newspapers indicates that the press provided an arena to contest for discursive control of the rituals. Putting into play ideas raised in chapter II, this chapter examines how the conservative papers perpetuated the idea that Pedro started the nation through their celebration of invented traditions. The conservative press used the celebrations of these three civic rituals to reinforce social order

and legitimize the rule of the emperor. Interpretations were not limited to the official viewpoint, however. Through an emphasis on space and an elision of key events in their reporting, the opposition editors laid their own impressions and opinions on these civic rituals and contested the official vision of the state. They did not wholly accept the state's definition of how the country was founded and what aspects of the political past should be celebrated. Essentially, the editors believed that the origins and perpetuation of the nation resided elsewhere—namely, in the will of the people. The efforts of editors to manipulate the interpretation of events were key elements in the effort to control the passive public.

Chapter V, “Building Tensions,” details the events in 1830 that led to the increasing tensions and discord in the court city of Rio de Janeiro. By 1830 the liberal newspaper editors had staked out the territory they wanted to defend. They actively mobilized their resources to fend off any suspected attacks on the key issues of popular sovereignty, freedom of the press, and rights embodied in the constitution. A series of events in 1830 forced them to mobilize the reading public against the direction of the government. Contested political rituals, a disturbing foreign parallel, and the specter of absolutism led to an increasingly critical editor corps. Liberal editors consistently felt the system they had spent so much effort in constructing and defending was eroding in front of their eyes. All the positions that the liberal editors had developed over the last three years of Pedro's rule were tested in 1830.

Finally, chapter VI, “Rhetoric and Riot,” examines the role of the newspapers and their editors in the riot of the Nights of the Broken Bottles. From the publication and debate of the proclamation, to the editors' involvement in the street fighting, to the printed call for Pedro to right the wrongs of the state, the editors played a significant role in shaping and guiding events. This chapter details those events and the role the editors played in them to

show how important the press had become to the political culture of Rio de Janeiro and urban Brazil as a whole. From an analysis of the official reports and newspaper interpretations of the riot two things become clear. First, the liberal newspapers and the mechanisms of the press were singled out for attack during the riot. Second, while on face value physical and personal events shaped the course of politics in the last month of Pedro's reign, a closer examination reveals that the press had become the dominant vehicle and forum for the exchange of ideas, both official and unofficial.

## CHAPTER I:

### NEWSPAPERS, EDITORS, AND READERS

This dissertation started from an interesting coincidence. The end of the First Empire and the abdication of Brazil's First Emperor coincided with a drastic increase in newspapers printed in Rio de Janeiro—from sixteen in 1827 to thirty one by the beginning of 1831, a ninety-four percent increase. The number of newspapers increased dramatically as tensions increased in Rio de Janeiro, and many Brazilian officials and eyewitnesses blamed the rising tension on the editors' rhetoric. This relationship has been noted by several historians, but it has not been fully explored in the historiography yet.<sup>1</sup> Thus emerged a research problem: What was the relationship between the turmoil and violence of the end of Brazil's First Empire and the rise in the number of newspapers in Rio de Janeiro?

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<sup>1</sup>The availability of newspapers has spurred several generations of historians to examine the history of Brazil's early press. The classic reference work, now in its 4<sup>th</sup> edition, is Nelson Werneck Sodré's, *Historia da Imprensa no Brasil*. (Rio de Janeiro: MAUAD, 1998) While Sodré took a macroscopic view to the entirety of the history of the Brazilian press, others have focused their monographs on particular periods, authors, or specific newspapers. The work that most resembles this one is Isabel Lustosa's *Insultos Impressos*, even though she focuses her attention on the newspapers of the independence period (1821-1822). Isabel Lustosa, *Insultos Impressos: A Guerra dos Jornalistas na Independência, 1821-1823*, (São Paulo: Editora Schwarz, 2000). Newspapers of that period differed greatly from those of the late first empire (as will be discussed below), but her work is essential to understanding the rapid development of a press corps in Rio de Janeiro. There have been no substantial works produced on the end of the First Empire (1827-1831) that encompass an overarching view of the Brazil press, though several works have recently appeared on specific editors (see footnote 30 below), and recently several popular histories of early Brazilian newspapers have appeared in Portuguese: Isabel Lustosa, *O Nascimento da Imprensa Brasileira*, (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor Ltda, 2003). Marco Morel and Mariana Monteiro de Barros, *Palavra, Imagem, e Poder: O Surgimento da Imprensa no Brasil do Século XIX*, (Rio de Janeiro: DP&A Editoria Ltda., 2003).

The first step in examining this relationship was to acquire the newspapers themselves. In this the researcher is fortunate. Scholars of Brazil, and indeed Brazilians in general, have benefited from a serious effort by the Fundação Biblioteca Nacional in Rio de Janeiro and the U.S. Library of Congress to microfilm and maintain all extant copies of Brazilian newspapers. Every effort was made to review all newspapers and printed pamphlets published from 1827 to early 1831 in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>2</sup> As a testament to the viability of the press in this period and an indication of the involvement of the reading public in the press debates, 2,027 individual editions contained 4,640 articles and 2,014 letters to the editor.<sup>3</sup>

It soon became clear that the second step was to devise some sort of research plan. To manage the sheer number of articles and letters to the editors and the wide variety of topics, a database was created that recorded both quantitative and qualitative information.<sup>4</sup> Such a large source base brings its own set of difficulties for the researcher. In this case, the largest potential source of inaccuracy was the researcher himself. To guard against the conscious or unconscious manipulation of data to support a particular point, the data was not analyzed until the database was completed. The arbitrariness of a qualitative database also

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<sup>2</sup>Two newspapers were unavailable for study during the time I had in Brazil: *Gazeta do Rio*, and the *Diario do Governo/Fluminense*. The staunch conservatism of the *Gazeta do Rio* in particular is sorely missed. However, its relevance to this study would have been limited by its short run: it ended publication in April of 1828. The *Rio Herald*, for one, found its demise a welcome sight. Calling the *Gazeta* a “servile toad-eater of the late ministry,” the *Herald* claimed the late *Gazeta* was “burnt in effigy by every true friend to his country, his Sovereign, and his constitutional liberty,” *Rio Herald*, 5 April 1828, #5. The mantle of the *Gazeta* was taken up by another ultra-conservative newspaper, the *Censor Brasileiro*, which is included in this study.

<sup>3</sup>These numbers refer only to the political periodicals, not the dailies such as *Jornal do Comercio* and *Diario do Rio*.

<sup>4</sup>The daily newspapers *Jornal do Comercio* and *Diario do Rio* were not included in the database because they differed in both form and function from the political periodicals. Their articles were used to support the analysis in this dissertation where appropriate, however. See the Appendices 3 and 4 for statistical tables that support the arguments in this dissertation.

poses problems for any researcher. Many of the articles could have been placed in various categories, which left room not only for human error, but also researcher manipulation. For example, the *Aurora Fluminense* carried several articles about the immigration of Portuguese émigrés who fled the absolutist rule of Miguel, the usurper of the Portuguese throne. The arrival of these émigrés was a hotly contested issue. Throughout his entire reign, Pedro I had to combat accusations that he was too focused on Portugal to the detriment of Brazil. Liberal nativists saw the arrival of thousands of Portuguese émigrés as proof of Pedro's meddling in the affairs of Portugal and, more troubling, as providing potential troops for any attempt by Pedro to combine the thrones. So, how to classify the articles pertaining to Portuguese immigration? Should they have been placed under Society—Immigration, or Politics—Portugal, or maybe Society—Nationalism? There was no easy way to decide this, so the articles were placed in the categories that seemed the best fit for that particular article. For example, an article about the forced expulsion of Pedro's supporters from Portugal was placed under Politics—Portugal; an article discussing the influx of foreigners and regulations regarding immigration was placed under Society—Immigration. Finally, complaints about the favoritism shown to the Portuguese émigrés in Rio were placed under Society—Nationalism.

In addition to problems stemming from the arbitrariness of qualitative sources, a discussion of statistics does not do justice to the vehemence and power of the editors' prose and ire. For example, in late 1830 news of the assassination of the radical newspaper editor from São Paulo, Libero Badaró, filled the newspapers of Rio. Liberal editors began to warn of violence in the streets: "I abhor the idea of seeing human blood spilt, but, if the

government does not protect us, what should we do?”<sup>5</sup> Yet all articles concerning the death of the editor are classified under the rather mundane heading: Politics—National. Likewise, the numerous debates and reports of the July Revolution in France fall under Politics—International even though liberal editors crowed “the triumph of national sovereignty obtained in France has, with reason, put the souls of Brazilians in an electric state.”<sup>6</sup>

For these reasons, the statistical information gleaned from the database helps describe the role of the newspapers in promoting debate and provides some helpful information about the types of topics discussed. The database does not replace the traditional analytical methods of the historian; rather, it is a tool to enable the researcher to attain an overall feel for the texture of political debate in late First Empire Rio de Janeiro. Perhaps most importantly, the topics in the database allow one to obtain a sense of what was important to the average resident of Rio de Janeiro. What was the topic of the day? What was being talked about and argued over in the local bar? What issues drove would-be editors to risk their lives and fortunes for the abstract ideal of “educating the populace”? Perhaps most revealing, what was so important that a reader would take up his or her pen and write a letter to editor? All this information is contained in the more than four thousand articles and two thousand letters to the editor.

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<sup>5</sup>*República*, 4 December 1830, #19.

<sup>6</sup>*Astrea*, 26 October 1830, #631.

## *Newspapers*

The motives of the authors and the desires of the readers remain unclear without a better understanding of the physical newspapers themselves. The publications that captivated the reading and listening publics of Rio de Janeiro were not what Brazilians or North Americans would today characterize as newspapers. The main purpose of newspapers today is to supply timely information to a wide audience. Such newspapers did exist in Brazil in the 1820s. The *Jornal do Comércio*, *Diario do Rio*, and *Gazeta do Rio* contained shipping news, reports of the parliament, advertisements, and runaway slave announcements. They were vastly different in appearance and intent from the political press that this dissertation studies.<sup>7</sup> The political newspapers of the First Empire were not used to inform. Since Rio de Janeiro was still an oral community, the majority of news was transmitted by word of mouth. Instead of printing timely news, authors used political newspapers to persuade readers and provide them with the means to be active participants in the direction of the state.<sup>8</sup>

The format, layout, and cost of the newspapers helped forward the editors' efforts at persuasion. The newspapers were all rather small (the size of a folio) and with few exceptions were one sheet of paper folded to make four pages, making them easy to carry around and read in all manner of public places. They were also affordable. The average

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<sup>7</sup>The Brazilian political periodical press of the First Empire shared many characteristics with newspapers in other Latin American countries. Nancy Vogeley reports that "the newspaper was a vehicle for discussing ideas and opinions rather than a journal with today's function of reporting daily events," while Fernando Unzueta wrote concerning Bolivian publications: "the common factor of these periodicals is their openly political orientation." Nancy Vogeley, "Mexican Newspaper Culture on the Eve of Mexican Independence," *Institute for the Study of Ideologies and Literature*, II, no. 17 (September-October 1983): 360. Fernando Unzueta, "Periodicos y formación nacional: Bolivia en sus primeros años," *Latin American Research Review*, 35 no. 2 (2000): 47.

<sup>8</sup>In this way, First Empire Rio de Janeiro newspapers were similar to European pamphlets of this time. Harline argues that "printing technology and means of communication were too slow for the press to serve as the primary source of news." Rather, "the main function of pamphlets was to persuade." Craig E. Harline, *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture in the Early Dutch Republic*, (Boston: M. Nijhoff, 1987), 11.



single edition cost eighty reis, which was roughly equivalent to a bar of soap or a loaf of bread. One reason why the costs remained low was the simplicity of the typography. Beyond the mastheads, which varied in complexity but remained static throughout the life of the newspaper, there was little to no adornment on the newspapers. Every available square inch of the newspaper was taken up by the articles and letters to the editor. Usually, a newspaper contained only one or two articles. Often, a single article spanned several editions, allowing editors to develop an idea in depth.

Although they did not look any different, newspapers of the late 1820s differed in significant regards to those published earlier in Brazil. In the independence period, newspapers were ephemeral, transitory publications. Individual titles rarely survived past a few editions, and they were only sold by subscription.<sup>9</sup> In the latter half of the decade there were certainly newspapers that ran for only a few editions. The *Novo Brasileiro Imparcial* and the *Brasileiro Offendido* lasted only three editions each, for example. However, the majority had healthy runs. By 1831 the *Astrea* had printed 688 editions, while the *Aurora Fluminense* could already boast of 467 by the time Pedro abdicated and would continue to publish for another five years. The longest running conservative newspaper was the *Brasileiro Imparcial* at 104 editions, and it only stopped there because of the death of its editor from natural causes. Since newspapers in the independence period were sold only by subscription, the editors knew exactly who they were writing to and adjusted their arguments to fit their audience.<sup>10</sup> In the late 1820s newspapers were sold by subscription and loose numbers; therefore, the editors could not be as sure of their audience. They had to balance

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<sup>9</sup>Lustosa, *Insultos Impresso*, 28.

<sup>10</sup>Lustosa, *Insultos Impresso*, 433.

the need to “preach to the choir” to retain their loyal readers with the need to persuade a wary but interested public.

Newspapers differed in form and function from other print media produced in late First Empire Rio de Janeiro. Unlike pamphlets, broadsides, and books, newspapers were immediate, informal, personal, and allowed for a dialogue between editors and editors, editors and the Emperor, and editors and the public through correspondence. The content of newspapers did not differ markedly from pamphlets, but, unlike pamphlets, newspapers were produced periodically, allowing for long-running commentary and discussions. Newspapers also allowed for interaction with the reading public, something that pamphlets were unable to do. Newspapers were also easily accessible, unlike books. The editor of the *Jornal do Comércio* complained that “bookstores are so rare and [books] are so excessively priced, they only serve to grace the libraries of the great.”<sup>11</sup> Besides cost and availability, another problem faced by book authors was the timeliness of their work. Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga of the *Aurora Fluminense* commented that “the benefit of political journals [is that] they exist in immediate contact with the people, transmitting the result of the profound meditations of the editors.”<sup>12</sup> If a politically-minded literate urban resident wanted to make an immediate impact on public discussion, publishing a newspaper was the most logical avenue.

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<sup>11</sup>*Jornal do Comércio*, 6 September 1828, #276.

<sup>12</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 29 February 1828, #21.

## *Editors*

The novelty of newspapers presented significant consequences and challenges for young urban intellectuals in 1820s Brazil. By the late 1820s, there still was not an established and respected profession of newspaper editor to provide role models for those who wanted a say in politics. The position was fluid; would-be editors had few examples to follow.<sup>13</sup> The most obvious consequence of the lack of a thriving corps of newspaper editors was that the profession of editor was hardly a profession at all. Very few editors in the late 1820s were full-time authors. Most held various other positions in Rio de Janeiro society. Of the editors we know about, two were elected to the house of deputies (Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga from Minas Gerais, and Luis Augusto May from Rio de Janeiro), one was a pharmacist (Ezequial Corrêa dos Santos), one owned a bookstore (again, Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga), and one was a priest (Padre Malheiros). Antonio Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* was one of the few to limit himself to the role of newspaper editor. He received the backing of powerful liberal elites, which allowed him to focus his time and energy on the production of opposition tracts.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>The model of France, often looked to for guidance by 19th-century Brazilian intellectuals, offered no precedent in this situation. The experience of newspaper editors in late 1820s Rio de Janeiro contrasts sharply with the experiences of their French counterparts. In France, journalists worked as free-lance authors, paid by the word. They often switched political persuasions depending on who was paying them that month. In fact, many wrote articles based on opinions they disagreed with. On the whole, Parisian authors were not autonomous and their writings could be considered more the official viewpoint of a party or organization than an individual. William M. Reddy, "Condottieri of the Pen: Journalists and the Public Sphere in Post Revolutionary France 1815-1850," *American Historical Review* 99, no. 5 (December 1994): 1546; Jeremy D. Popkin, *Press, Revolution, and Social Identities in France, 1830-1835*, (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 43.

<sup>14</sup>According to his autobiography, Fonseca was the spokesman for a secret society that included such Rio de Janeiro luminaries as Bernardo Pereira de Vasconcelos, Padre Joze Custodio Dias, Joze da Costa Carvalho, Marquez de Monte-Alegre, Manoel da Fonseca Lima e Silva, Nicolau Pereira de Campos Vergueiro, José Joaquim Vieira Souza, Padre Diogo Antonio Feijó, Padre Jozé Martiniano de Alencar, and Manoel Odorico Mendes. Antonio Borgês da Fonseca, *Manifesto Politico, Apontamentos de Minha Vida Politica e da Vida Politica do Dr. Urbano Sabino Pessoa de Melo*, (Recife: Typ. Commercial de G. H. de Mira, 1867).

Editors in Rio de Janeiro almost always worked alone, and their newspapers were not the organs of established parties, even though several observers characterized them that way. For example, an unknown English traveler commented “almost every week some new organ of a party, full of hate, appears.”<sup>15</sup> And the Portuguese businessman Bosche commented that “these newspapers were the organ of different parties, the editors being the object of rancor of adverse parties, habitually stamping their polemics with blood.”<sup>16</sup> It is no surprise that observers saw newspapers as being attached to a particular party. Newspapers were so partisan that their political orientation was immediately obvious to readers at the time. This was important to the editors. They had a limited amount of space to discuss their topics, and there was little room for equivocation. Editors bristled at the epithet of party, though. The *Rio Herald* boldly wrote: “we deny that we are opposition, and we are not ministerial. We are free.”<sup>17</sup> The *Espelho Diamantino* spelled out the aversion to parties a bit more clearly: “We are Constitutional Monarchists. We do not believe in either a Republican party or an Absolutist [party], for [only those who are] isolated and without influence over the nation long to form parties.”<sup>18</sup> In keeping with other Latin American liberals, Brazilian saw political parties as contradicting enlightenment principles of political free will. While there were no established political parties in Brazil in the 1820s, there were well-defined differences between conservative supporters of the emperor and the liberal opposition.

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<sup>15</sup>*Narrativa de viagem de um Naturalista Ingles ao Rio de Janeiro e Minas Gerais (1833-1835)*, (Rio: Imprensa Nacional, 1943), 39.

<sup>16</sup>Eduardo Theodoro Bosche, “Quadros Alternados” *Revista Instituto Histórigrafico Geográfico Brasileiro* 83, (1918): 233.

<sup>17</sup>*Rio Herald*, 19 April 1828, #7.

<sup>18</sup>*Espelho Diamantino*, 4 February 1828, #9.

The three main groups vying for the attention of Rio de Janeiro readers were the conservatives, the moderate liberals, and the radical liberals.<sup>19</sup> The conservative editors, represented by Joaquim José da Silva Maia of the *Brasileiro Imparcial*, wrote for the *adoptivos* or adopted Brazilians. Thousands of Portuguese immigrated with the court to Brazil in 1808 and remained after Dom João returned to Portugal in 1821. They had no links to the traditional economy of the former colony and were major beneficiaries of Dom João's decree of 1808 that opened the ports to international commerce.<sup>20</sup> As will be seen in chapter II, conservative editors resisted any attempt to curb the hereditary rights of the monarch, although they never espoused returning Brazil to colonial status. The conservative newspapers were often termed "ministerial" and were easy targets for the nativist ire of the liberal editors.

The moderate liberal newspapers represented Brazilians who were tied to the traditional plantation economy and desired stability above all else. While considered part of the opposition to Pedro's government, these authors remained pragmatic in their liberalism for fear of slave uprisings and international tensions. Representative of this group was the most famous of Brazil's early editors, Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga of the *Aurora Fluminense*.

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<sup>19</sup>This dissertation is concerned mostly with the viewpoint of the liberal authors. Several reasons justify that decision. First, two of the longest running conservative newspapers were unavailable for consultation while the research for this dissertation was being conducted (*Diário do Governo/Fluminense* and the *Gazeta do Rio*). Second, the numbers of liberal newspapers consistently outnumbered conservative throughout the period this dissertation examines, indicating that the liberal newspapers reflected the opinions of a larger segment of the reading public and concomitantly had a potentially greater impact on events.

<sup>20</sup>By the time of its founding in 1837, the Conservative Party's membership shifted away from those who favored close ties to Portugal to those who had a vested interest in the plantation system of Brazil. Jeffrey D. Nedell, "Party Formation and State-Making: The Conservative Party and the Reconstruction of the Brazilian State, 1831-1840," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 81, no. 2 (May 2001).

As will be further discussed in chapter II, moderate liberal editors argued for some limits to the rule of the emperor, but they never espoused drastic political upheaval.<sup>21</sup>

Radical liberal newspapers made up the bulk of the titles during the independence movement (1821-1822).<sup>22</sup> Persecution of editors after the solidification of Pedro's rule and the dissolution of the constitutional assembly in 1823 limited the role of the radicals until late in the First Empire. While the *Astrea* was termed radical by many conservative editors, the appearance of the *República* of Antonio Borgês da Fonseca and the *Nova Luz Brasileiro* of Ezequial Corrêa dos Santos signified the real arrival of the radicals in late 1830. The radical editors wrote for the young urban Brazilians who had no ties to the traditional plantation system and who favored political models along the lines of the U.S. federation and the theoretical principles of the French Revolution.

Instead of being the mouthpieces of a political party, newspapers were the products of individuals. Most editors reveled in the personal connection they had to their publications. Many newspapers could be bought or sold in the home of the editor and the most radical editors often made a point of signing their names with their home addresses.<sup>23</sup> Connecting names to publications indicates that the editors stood behind their works and were not afraid of the consequences of their ideas. As will be seen in chapter II, both newspaper editors and those who wrote letters to the editor removed the veil of anonymity to discuss key points of

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<sup>21</sup>"It was in their interest to defend national unity and to reform the existing political system to permit their participation, indeed domination, rather than destroy it. Moreover, elite consensus or the need to maintain the institution of slavery in Brazil imposed severe limitations on Brazilian liberalism." Leslie Bethell, *Brazil: Empire and Republic, 1822-1930*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 62. Even though she associates the ideas of an ultra-radical liberal editor with those of a moderate, Emilia Viotti da Costa's chapter on liberalism is still an effective introduction to the realities of Brazilian liberalism. *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories*, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1985).

<sup>22</sup>Lustosa, *Insultos Impressos*.

<sup>23</sup>See for instance, *República*, 20 November 1830, #15.

honor and accusations of abuses against the liberty of the press. There was a danger to signing names to newspapers, however. Attacks against editors were not uncommon, and during the riots of 1831 Antonio Borgês da Fonseca faced angry mobs shouting “Death to the Repúblico,” the newspaper he edited.

In our period, three editors (of *L’Echo*, *Malagueta*, and *Voz Fluminense*) were attacked on the streets in Rio de Janeiro. Editors in other provinces also were attacked, most notably the editors of the *Diario do Pernambuco* and the *Abelho Pernambucano*, and Libero Badaró of the São Paulo *Constitucional*. In August of 1829, Luiz Augusto May of the *Malagueta* was attacked while leaving the house of deputies. May was no stranger to danger, but his attack in 1829 struck a chord with the reading public.<sup>24</sup> In a telling worthy of Arthur Conan Doyle, the *Astrea* recounted the attack: “May was accustomed, when he came to the Legislature, to putting his hat in the corner where the Deputies leave their hats. On this day, when leaving the Legislature, he found his hat in a different location than where he put it.” Thinking nothing of it, May left the legislature hand in hand with another deputy. When they reached the rua da Cadea, May was attacked with a blow from behind by a “man of color almost black (vulgarly called Cabra) who had followed them since the door of the Legislature.” The attacker fled and May was carried into a nearby storefront. When May’s hat was retrieved, someone noticed that a small nail had been placed under the leather band that encircled the crown. The intention, the *Astrea* believed, was to push the nail through with a blow. The intended blow was warded off by May’s defensive moves and the tragedy

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<sup>24</sup>He was physically attacked early in Pedro’s reign, which forced him to stop the publication of the *Malagueta* for a while, but May rebounded to take a seat in the House of Deputies and republish the *Malagueta*.

was averted. This case indicated two things to the *Astrea*: first, that the attack was premeditated, and second, the assassin was “well trained and well paid.”<sup>25</sup>

The attack on May filled the newspapers for the two weeks after the attack. When it became clear that May would survive, the attention of the editors reverted to infighting over coverage of the event and perceived slights. When the *Jornal do Comércio* first reported the attack, the typographer mistakenly placed the article under the heading “Imperial Theater.” Even though the editor of the *Jornal* apologized for the mistake, the *Astrea* was not one to let such a slight pass. The *Astrea* wondered if the *Jornal* thought these “scenes were fit for a theater.” The editor of the *Jornal* should have also been careful of the adjective “Imperial.” If this was a theatrical play, then the *Astrea* believed it belonged in the “theater of Ministers and Absolutists.”<sup>26</sup>

Anonymous attacks against newspaper editors validated their project and gave them and other editors leave to raise the importance of their work. After the editor of the *Voz Fluminense* was almost struck by several rocks that came flying through his window, the editor of the *Nova Luz Brasileira* remarked on the important work that the *Voz* had been doing in the capital. “I know that this editor,” the *Nova Luz* wrote, “had been already threatened several times, but I also know he has the courage” to continue.<sup>27</sup> Likewise, the *Aurora* wondered what the point was of attacking newspaper editors. Soon after the editor of the liberal *Diario do Pernambuco* was attacked, the ultra-liberal *Abelha Pernambucana* appeared. The same thing happened in Rio. After May was attacked, two new radical

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<sup>25</sup> *Astrea*, 1 September 1829, #466.

<sup>26</sup> *Astrea*, 1 September 1829, #466.

<sup>27</sup> *Nova Luz Brasileira*, 19 January 1830, #12.



newspapers began publication.<sup>28</sup> Newspaper editors did not commonly face attackers in the street. More commonly, they faced accusers in the court, as we will see in the next chapter.

Besides opening editors to potential attacks, signing names to newspapers also gave the newspapers an informal, personal feel. For example, whenever an edition was skipped the author would apologize for the illness (or sometimes imprisonment) that kept him from writing.<sup>29</sup> These were men with whom the reading public could identify. The story of Brazil's most famous early editor clarifies this point. Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga was a bookseller who inherited his business from his father, a Portuguese immigrant. Evaristo was not part of the landed gentry, nor was he part of the titled elite. He did not study in Europe, nor was a favorite of the court. Yet, Evaristo was able to transcend his position as urban merchant to become one of the most powerful men in later First Empire and early Regency Rio de Janeiro.<sup>30</sup> The reading public could identify with this young urban Brazilian member of the middle class because he was no different from them. He spoke their language and voiced their concerns.

Evaristo's position as respected bookseller made his transition to newspaper editor and political leader natural. For a small town in a largely illiterate empire, Rio was home to a

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<sup>28</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 20 November 1829, #268.

<sup>29</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 19 October 1830, #86; 15 April 1831, #131.

<sup>30</sup>For more detailed information about Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga, see the classic biography by Octávio Tarquínio de Sousa: *Evaristo da Veiga*, (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1988). For biographies of other editors from this period, see Maria Lúcia de Souza Rangel Ricci, *A Atuação Política de um Publicista: Antonio Borgês da Fonseca*, (Campinas: PUC, 1995); Mário Márcio de A. Santos, *Um Homem Contra o Imperio: Vida e Lutar de Antonio Borgês da Fonseca*, (Recife: FUNDARPE, 1995); Marcello Otávio Basile, *Ezequiel Corrêa dos Santos: Um Jacobino na Corte Imperial*, (Rio e Janeiro: Editora FGV, 2001), Marco Morel, *Cipriano Barata na Sentinela da Liberdade*, (Salvador: Academica de Letras da Bahia, 2001), and Gondin da Fonseca, *Biografia do Jornalismo Carioca*, (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Quaresma, 1941).

thriving book trade.<sup>31</sup> The members of the court, as well as a large foreign population, were frequent purchasers of European-printed works. It was common to find in the columns of the *Jornal do Comércio* listings of European books, particularly French political theorists, for sale in the numerous bookstores around the city. For example, in late 1829 the *Jornal* advertised the complete works of J. J. Rousseau, all 39 volumes, and 14 volumes of the Parisian newspaper *Le Moniteur* from 1817-1823.<sup>32</sup> Book dealers had a peculiar role in this developing literary conclave. Through the exigencies of their trade, they were very well read and could command knowledge of foreign current events hitherto available only to high-ranking members of the court. Their role as distributors of knowledge made them intellectual authorities and leaders of the nascent literate elite.

The popularity of the *Aurora Fluminense* vaulted Evaristo into the national limelight. In 1830 he won a seat in the house of deputies from the interior province of Minas Gerais, which he had not yet even visited. During the abdication and early years of the regency, Evaristo played a prominent role in ensuring social control was maintained and the radicals did not wield an undue amount of power. The only reason Evaristo had the political power he did was because he was a newspaper editor. He rode the wave of newspapers to the crest of national politics, and in turn solidified the profession of newspaper editor as a viable, important, and powerful profession.

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<sup>31</sup>For a discussion of books, bookstores, and ideas, see Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, "Livro e Sociedade no Rio de Janeiro," *Anais do 1º Encontro do Núcleo Regional de São Paulo: A Independência: Um Debate*. (São Paulo: Euripedes Simões de Paula, 1973), 441-457; Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva, "A Transmissão, a Conservação, e a Difusão da Cultura no Rio de Janeiro (1808-1821)," *Revista de História* 51, no. 102 (April-June 1975); Lúcia Maria Bastos P. Neves, "Leitura e Leituras no Brasil, 1820-1822: O Esboço Frustrado de uma Esfera Pública de Poder," *Acervo*, 8, no. 1-2 (Jan-Dec 1995); Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire*; E. Bradford Burns, "The Enlightenment in Two Colonial Libraries," *Journal of the History of Ideas*. 25, no.3 (July-September 1964).

<sup>32</sup>*Jornal do Comércio*, 22 December 1829, #651.

One of the reasons Evaristo was able to claim such broad support was because his readers saw themselves in him. Newspaper editors actively created the impression that they wrote for the ‘common man.’ The editor of the *Verdade sem Rebouço* began his newspaper with “I do not write for literary men; I write for the so-called ignorant people who do not know there is a Constitution, rights, and guarantees of the citizenry.”<sup>33</sup> A common theme in the first editions of newspapers was to claim that the “century of public spirit” and the grave threats to the nation impelled the author to take up his particular cause.<sup>34</sup> When the *Malagueta* began publishing in 1822, the editor voiced a common sentiment: “at first I limited myself to private reflection because I realized my forces were disproportionate to the means necessary to fix and guide public opinion.”<sup>35</sup> Apparently this editor came to the same resolution as the editor of the *Astrea* did seven years later: “In the crisis in which we find our patria, it would be an inexcusable crime for a Brazilian of birth or of heart to show himself indifferent to the march that our government appears to follow, not preventing when possible the future that threatens us and manifesting his opinion through the journals.”<sup>36</sup>

The editors saw themselves as educators.<sup>37</sup> They believed their profession made them responsible for educating the populace in theories of self-government and preparing the people for the ability to rule effectively. In creating this role for themselves, the editors very

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<sup>33</sup>*Verdade sem Rebouço*, 18 May 1829, #1.

<sup>34</sup>*Tribuna do Povo*, 14 March 1831, #21.

<sup>35</sup>*Malagueta*, 6 April 1822, #14.

<sup>36</sup>*Astrea*, 17 February 1829, #392

<sup>37</sup>The *Aurora Fluminense* advocated reading all the newspapers to access every possible avenue of education: “one of the means most unrecognized at this time of acquiring the knowledge of a great number of facts, doctrines more or less useful and interesting is reading the Journals of all types” 2 January 1829, #136. This desire to educate was expressed mostly by the liberal opposition newspapers. The theme was so common that the conservative *Brasileiro Imparcial* ridiculed it: liberal editors were “wise men who instruct the Public at 40 reis [the cost of a single edition] a lesson” 24 February 1830, #16.

consciously followed the philosophy of enlightenment. Aspects of enlightenment ideology appear throughout the reporting in the newspapers, and even in the names of the newspapers. Several of the liberal newspapers had names that easily called to mind enlightenment concepts. A few examples are: *Nova Luz Brasileira* [New Brazilian Light], *Luz Brasileira* [Brazilian Light], and *O Espelho da Justiça* [The Mirror of Justice]. Other newspapers took their names from classical antiquity, a major component of enlightenment philosophy, including the *Astrea* [Roman goddess of Justice]. The *Aurora Fluminense* [Rio de Janeiro Sunrise] blended both naming styles, as its editor was surely aware that Aurora was the Roman goddess of dawn.

Liberal editors felt they had a duty to impart their knowledge and provide guidance for the common man. In keeping with the philosophy of enlightenment, the *Voz Fluminense* argued that “all men in society should cooperate for the good of the Patria: the literate with their lights, the rich with their means, the poor with their arms, the old with their counsel.”<sup>38</sup> The concept of enlightenment was not restricted to Brazil in this period. For Mexico, Nancy Vogeley argues that “knowledge in a practical form was extended [by the newspapers] to all men and women through what became known as cafe culture.”<sup>39</sup> Unzueta found a similar concept of the role of newspaper editors in Bolivia in the nineteenth century. He quoted one of his source newspapers as writing “the ‘noble object’ of the ‘public periodicals’ should be to ‘illuminate the nation.’”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>*Voz Fluminense*, 21 December 1829, #28.

<sup>39</sup>Vogeley, “Mexican Newspaper Culture,” 362.

<sup>40</sup>Unzueta, “Periodicos y formación nacional,” 49.

The element of enlightenment philosophy most central to the role of the journalist was educating the people by involving them in the discussion of the state. By publishing their ideas, the editors believed they were preventing the government from taking undue liberties with the direction of the state. A common thought of the liberal editors was that “when a tyrant wants to enslave the people,” he limits access to books and newspapers “because a despot is only able to rule over an ignorant people.”<sup>41</sup> Hence, many of the newspaper titles included the concept of the “people.” The *Voz Fluminense* [Rio de Janeiro Voice], *Tribuna do Povo* [Tribune of the People], and *Cartas ao Povo* [Letters to the People], all included the concept of speaking to or for the people.

While the editors believed they wrote to and for the “people,” it is not immediately clear exactly who those people were. In many ways, the “people” was a rhetorical construction to lend weight to the analysis of the editors. If an editor could say that ‘a great number of people’ felt a certain way, then his arguments gained a sense of authority. In other ways, the people were very much present and played an important role in the development of the political philosophies present in the newspapers. To borrow a term from Marco Morel, the newspapers cultivated an “active public,” and competed for a “passive public.”<sup>42</sup>

The active public, which will be explored in more detail in chapter II, was directly involved in political debate. Members of this group wrote letters to the editor, served on juries, and voted for parliamentary representatives. Their actions helped mold the political discussion. The passive public did not act; rather, the editors competed for control of the passive public to lend weight to their arguments. A classic trope of the conservative editors,

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<sup>41</sup>*Jornal do Comércio*, 6 September 1828, #276.

<sup>42</sup>Marco Morel and Mariana Monteiro de Barros, *Palavra, Imagem, e Poder: O Surgimento da Imprensa no Brasil do Século XIX*, (Rio de Janeiro: DP&A Editoria Ltda., 2003), 40-42.

which will be explored in chapter IV, was to depict throngs of people on hand to witness public ceremonies attended by the emperor. A large and visible public was necessary to complete the picture of the emperor's popularity and possibly encouraged residents of Rio de Janeiro to join the imagined throngs. At the same time, the conservatives belittled the liberal groups who supposedly tried to disrupt the joyous celebration of the majority. The liberals countered with their own vision of large groups of peaceful demonstrators marching against the government. Controlling the passive public did not necessarily mean being in control of the nameless and faceless crowd. Rather, it meant to be able to rhetorically wield this public in debates.

### ***Readers***

For newspapers to have any impact, and for the profession of editor to have any meaning, someone had to read the newspapers. Selling newspapers by single numbers greatly increased the number of access points for prospective readers in First Empire Rio de Janeiro. Newspapers could be bought in stores that sold books or other goods; they could be read for free in the library; and they could be found wherever people congregated in the densely populated commercial district of the city. Newspapers were advertised for sale in thirteen bookstores in late 1820s Rio de Janeiro, though Rio could boast of at least twenty-eight stores that sold books (a marked increase from the eleven bookstores in 1821).<sup>43</sup> It is likely that the remaining bookstores also sold newspapers as well. Ten newspapers did not list a place where they could be bought. Included in these ten were the *Diario do Rio de*

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<sup>43</sup>See appendix 5 for list of bookstores in 1820s Rio de Janeiro.

*Janeiro* and the *Jornal do Comércio*, the two dailies that had the largest circulation in Rio de Janeiro. Probably, they could have been bought in most of the locations where other newspapers were sold, and that fact was too obvious to advertise on the front of each edition.

The stores that advertised newspapers for sale sold multiple titles, but they did not sell every newspaper published in the city. Even though they were selective in the particular titles they carried, bookstores sold newspapers from a variety of political viewpoints. For example, João Baptista dos Santos sold at least twelve different newspapers—of which eight could be considered liberal. A reader looking for the ultra-liberal *Astrea* might find himself in Santos' shop at the same time as someone looking for the ultra-conservative *Brasileiro Imparcial*.

Bookstores were not the only places where an interested reader might purchase a newspaper. While there were no commercial literary parlors in Rio de Janeiro as there were in France during this time, newspapers were sold and discussed at pharmacies, the typographer's office, the home of the editor, and a variety of other shops.<sup>44</sup> As an indication of the variety of places an interested reader could find a newspaper, seven different stores sold only one newspaper title. These shops were primarily other businesses: pharmacies,

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<sup>44</sup>Literary parlors were common in France (520 in the early part of the nineteenth century), and were gaining popularity in Mexico at this time. The first literary parlor to open in Rio de Janeiro was the (still existent) Gabinete Portuguese de Leitura, which opened in 1837. For France, see François Pearent-Lardeur, *Les Cabinets de Lecture: La Lecture Publique à Paris sous la Restauration*, (Paris: Payot, 1982) and Robert Darnton, *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History*, (New York: Norton, 1990). For Mexico, see Lilia Guiot de la Garza, "El Competido Mundo de la Lectura: Librerías e Gabinetes de Lectura en la Ciudad de México, 1821-1855," *Construtores de un Cambio Cultural: Impensores-Editores y Libreros en la Ciudad de México*, Laura Suárez de la Torre, ed. (Mexico: Instituto Mora, 2003). For Brazil, see Nelson Schapochnik, "Contextos de Leitura no Rio de Janeiro do Século XIX: Salões, Gabinetes Literários e Bibliotecas," *Imagens da Cidade: Séculos XIX e XX*, Stella Bresciani, ed., (São Paulo: ANPUH, 1993).

bars, coffee houses etc. For example, the editor of the *Nova Luz Brasileira*, Ezequiel Corrêa dos Santos, sold his and only his newspaper out of his pharmacy on the rua das Mangueiras.<sup>45</sup>

Newspapers could also be bought in the office of the typographer. Almost all the typographers printed multiple titles, so readers had a choice of titles.<sup>46</sup> The majority of those that printed multiple titles printed both liberal and conservative newspapers. For example, the typography house of Ogier and Company printed the ultra-liberal *Repúblico* and *Narcizo*, as well as the ultra-conservative *Novo Brasileiro Imparcial* and *Moderador*. The exception to this general rule was the Astrea typography house, which published six liberal newspapers. One would expect to find only liberal newspaper readers at the Astrea's office, making it a likely hangout for supporters of the opposition.

Interested readers could also find daily copies of the newspapers in the royal library. The library, established by the Prince Regent João in 1808, contained over sixty-thousand volumes by the middle of the 1820s, in addition to all the newspapers of the court and many from the provinces. The library was open every weekday for four hours—from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The editor of the *Aurora Fluminense* wanted the library to be open longer—from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. “Brazilian youths are avid to learn,” the editor argued, and longer hours would facilitate their education.<sup>47</sup> He may have had a point. The traveler Ernest Ebel remarked that every morning he shared the library's reading room with a “half dozen readers,” all

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<sup>45</sup>Marcello Otávio Basile, *Ezequiel Corrêa dos Santos: Um Jacobino na Corte Imperial*, (Rio de Janeiro: Editora FGV, 2001), 83.

<sup>46</sup>See appendix 6 for a list of typographers.

<sup>47</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 27 November 1830, #429.



engrossed in the daily journals.<sup>48</sup> Reverend Robert Walsh also noticed that a steady stream of readers followed the daily arrival of the city's newspapers at the library.<sup>49</sup>

Newspapers were everywhere. From traditional locations like bookstores and the library, to less traditional places like pharmacies and the printer's office, prospective readers did not have to go to great lengths to find a newspaper. Access to the printed word was clearly not a problem in late 1820s Rio de Janeiro.

The fact that newspapers were available as single numbers and could be found in numerous locations greatly increases the number of prospective readers, but it still entails only the literate. Reliable quantitative data is not available for Brazil in the early nineteenth century. Clearly, however, the *Aurora Fluminense* was stretching the truth when it claimed "it is rare to find a child, even in the most poor families in the Provinces, who does not know how to read and write."<sup>50</sup> Since Leslie Bethell reports that by the end of the Second Empire less than twenty percent of the free population of Rio could read, the literacy rate of Pedro I's capital probably hovered around ten percent.<sup>51</sup> Suffice it to say that early nineteenth-century Brazil was an oral culture.

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<sup>48</sup>Ernst Ebel, *O Rio de Janeiro e Seus Arredores em 1824*, Joaquim de Sousa Leão Filho trans. (São Paulo: Companhia Ed. Nacional, 1972), 105.

<sup>49</sup>Rev. Robert Walsh, *Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829*, (Boston: Richardson et al, 1831), 242.

<sup>50</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 4 August 1828, #75.

<sup>51</sup>Leslie Bethell, ed. *Brazil: Empire and Republic, 1822-1930*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 45. Jorge Padua found that as late as 1960 only thirty-nine percent of the adult population was literate. Jorge Padua, *El Analfabetismo en America Latina: Un Estudio Empirico con Especial Referencia a los Casos de Peru, Mexico y Argentina*, (Mexico, D.F.: El Colegio de Mexico, 1979), 37. These numbers roughly correspond to other Latin American countries during this time. In the first half of the nineteenth century, around ten percent of the population of Mexico City was literate, while in Bolivia only seven percent of the population could read. Garza, "El Competido Mundo de la Lectura," 438; Fernando Unzueta, "Periodicos y formación nacional," 42.

The world of the literate did not exist in complete isolation from the predominately oral culture; there was constant transfer of ideas back and forth. Cities in particular provided numerous areas of interaction. For Rio de Janeiro, Sandra Lauderdale Graham provides an interesting examination of the close spatial proximity of servants and masters in the middle to late nineteenth century. She believes that the nineteenth-century Brazilian city did not allow for separate social spheres.<sup>52</sup> Likewise, João José Reis found numerous points of interaction between various social groups in nineteenth-century Bahia.<sup>53</sup> Finally, Silvia Arrom, in her discussion of popular riots in late nineteenth-century Latin America, argues that lower-class urban residents appropriated elite discourse to form their own strong opinions.<sup>54</sup> While all these works discuss the crossover of information between the two social spheres, they neglect the means of transmission.<sup>55</sup>

The reading aloud of newspapers provided the crucial means for the transference of ideas and ideology between the literate and illiterate urban populations. The transference of printed ideas to illiterate listeners has been explored in other contexts. David Cressy has traced the involvement of illiterate people in the debates of colonial North America. He believes there was a “spillover from the literate to the illiterate.” That spillover came from the literate reading aloud “printed ballads, news-sheets and chapman’s wares” to the listening

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<sup>52</sup>Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street: The Domestic World of Servants and Masters in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), 4.

<sup>53</sup>João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising in 1835 in Bahia*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

<sup>54</sup>Silvia Marina Arrom, “Introduction: Rethinking Urban Politics in Latin America before the Populist Era,” *Riots in the Cities: Popular Politics and the Urban Poor in Latin America 1765-1910*, Silvia M. Arrom, ed., (DE: SR Books, 1996), 5.

<sup>55</sup>Burns seems somewhat mystified when he writes: “somehow the intellectuals communicated to the lower strata of urban society the ideas of which they were brokers.” E. Bradford Burns, “The Intellectuals as Agents of Change and the Independence of Brazil 1724-1822,” *From Colony to Nation: Essays on the Independence of Brazil*, A. J. R. Russell-Wood, ed., (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 245.

illiterate.<sup>56</sup> David Hall finds the “word of mouth tradition of a literate culture” dates back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England.<sup>57</sup> Concerning the early nineteenth century in England, James Curran writes that “newspaper reading was essentially a social activity: newspapers were usually read aloud in a social setting outside the home or shared between friends.”<sup>58</sup> Jeremy Popkin has found that even though nineteenth-century France could boast of a literacy rate over fifty percent, newspapers were still read aloud and discussed in public places. “Reading the press was a ritual of public life,” Popkin argues, “not an accidental occurrence or one relegated to odd moments of ‘free’ time during the day.”<sup>59</sup> David Vincent believes that an editor of an English working class periodical was “intensely aware that for reasons of cost, custom, and the uneven distribution of literacy, his writings were likely to be more often read aloud than silently.” Therefore, editors consciously adopted a writing style that reflected the patterns of oral communication.<sup>60</sup> The oral delivery of the newspapers in largely illiterate societies inspired lively debate and spread editors’ messages far beyond the narrow confines of the literate elite.

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<sup>56</sup>David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 14.

<sup>57</sup>David D. Hall, “Introduction: The Uses of Literacy in New England, 1600-1850,” *Printing and Society in Early America*, William L. Joyce, ed., (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1983), 12.

<sup>58</sup>James Curran, “Capitalism and Control of the Press, 1800-1975,” *Mass Communication and Society*, James Curran, ed., (London: Sage Publishers, 1979), 195-230, 204.

<sup>59</sup>Jeremy D. Popkin, *Press, Revolution, and Social Identities in France, 1830-1835*, (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 59. Robert Darnton agrees with Popkin: “For the common people in early modern Europe, reading was a social activity. It took place in workshops, barns, and taverns,” *The Kiss of Lamourette*, 68. For further discussion of reading aloud in eighteenth and nineteenth-century France, see Jeremy D. Popkin, *Revolutionary News: The Press in France, 1789-1799*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1990), 80.

<sup>60</sup>David Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750-1914*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 243.

The practice of reading printed material out loud is well documented for nineteenth-century Latin America. François Xavier-Guerra, Nancy Vogeley, and Lilia Guiot de la Garza all relate that in nineteenth-century Mexico City newspapers were commonly read aloud to large crowds. For Vogeley, newspapers had a formative impact on the development of “popular expression.” The newspaper was “an arbiter of language as it selectively transmitted culture to the masses,” making its editor “a mediator between the classes.”<sup>61</sup> Likewise, Fernando Unzueta believes that newspaper editors in Bolivia wrote with the implicit intent of educating the illiterate masses. The “oral publicity” of the early nineteenth century Latin American city ensured their messages were heard.<sup>62</sup>

The evidence for reading aloud in Brazil comes from a variety of sources. Several travelers noticed urban Brazilians reading newspapers aloud and discussing politics during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. Maria Graham thought it rather inconvenient that Brazilian shopkeepers were too “engaged, as now is not unfrequently [sic] the case, in talking politics, or reading a newspaper” to fill her order.<sup>63</sup> The Reverend Robert Walsh found the number of people engaged in political debate striking. In “passing through the streets in the morning, after the issues of the newspapers, [he] constantly saw groups of neighbors assembled in some shop, and one of them sitting on the counter, reading a sheet of correspondence to the rest.”<sup>64</sup> Graham informs us that even the opera house became a forum

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<sup>61</sup>François Xavier Guerra, *Modernidad e Independencia: Ensayos sobre las Revoluciones Hispánicas*, (Madrid: Editorial Mapfere, 1992), 293; Nancy Vogeley, “Mexican Newspaper Culture on the Eve of Mexican Independence,” *Institute for the Study of Ideologies and Literature*, vol. II, no. 17 (September-October 1983), 358-377, 364; Garza, “El Competido Mundo de la Lectura.”

<sup>62</sup>Unzueta, “Periodicos,” 57.

<sup>63</sup>Maria Graham, *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil*, (NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969 [1824]), 189.

<sup>64</sup>Walsh, *Notices of Brazil*, 240.

where the issues debated in the press were aired publicly: “Between the acts of the play the people called on several of their orators to address the Prince and the people. This all was obeyed by several speakers, and some of their addresses were printed and handed about the theatre.”<sup>65</sup>

Other scholars have noted how common it was to find ideas being discussed in the street that were originally printed in the newspapers. An 1871 historian reported “the curious population read [newspapers] from sunrise to sunset, repeating the subject of the paper from mouth to mouth and the most extravagant calumnies [passed] as truth.” “Now in prose, then in verse,” the author continued, “the papers always produced a fatal impression.”<sup>66</sup>

Schapochnik argues that newspapers, pamphlets, and broadsides were written to be read aloud. Songs, verses, and colorful narratives all lent themselves to easy oral transmission.<sup>67</sup> Reading newspapers aloud was not limited to the late 1820s. In her discussion of the transfer of the Court in 1808, Kirsten Schultz found that in “eating houses, pharmacies, and other private and public places of gathering, Rio’s residents listened to revelations or heard conversations about the messages and meanings of constitutionalist works.”<sup>68</sup>

Public newspaper reading has become such an ingrained part of nineteenth-century urban Brazilian culture that numerous fictional works recount a similar scene. Reading aloud the daily newspapers or pamphlets in Nacib’s bar in Jorge Amado’s *Gabriela* was the norm

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<sup>65</sup>Graham, *Journal*, 178.

<sup>66</sup>J.M. Pereira da Silva, *Segundo Período do Reinado de Dom Pedro I no Brasil*, (Rio de Janeiro: B.L. Garnier, 1871), 24.

<sup>67</sup>Schapochnik, “Contextos de Leitura,” 152.

<sup>68</sup>Kirsten Schultz, *Tropical Versailles: Empire, Monarchy, and the Portuguese Royal Court in Rio de Janeiro, 1808 – 1821*, (NY: Routledge, 2001), 249.

rather than the exception. Obviously, literacy was not a prerequisite to participation in political debate.

### ***Conclusion***

The availability and sheer numbers of newspapers had a two-fold effect on Rio de Janeiro society. First, newspapers made available to editors a political and social standing hitherto inaccessible. Anyone with a little education and a little money (or a few backers) could start a newspaper and enter the world of politics. The affairs of the state were no longer the private concern of the wealthy landed elite or the Portuguese-born courtesans. Brazilian-born middle-class editors like Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga were able to rise to positions of prominence using only the ideas in their newspapers themselves. The second effect was a product of the availability of newspapers. Newspapers were everywhere in late First Empire Rio de Janeiro. They could be bought in dozens of shops and their arguments could be heard on almost every street corner. Consequently, an interested resident did not have to go out of his or her way to read, hear, or discuss the political commentary of the day. Indeed, it may have been a chore to avoid the saturation of news that characterized the city. The ubiquity of newspapers opened the political arena to a broad segment of the population. Just as newspapers provided an avenue for political expression for editors, they likewise provided an avenue for a wide segment of the populace to become involved in the functioning and direction of the state. The two-fold effect of the rise in the numbers of newspapers would have profound consequences for the emperor's ability to rule and the continuing efforts of Brazilians to define their political identity.

CHAPTER II:  
THE “ABSOLUTISM OF OPINION”: NEWSPAPER EDITORS AND  
THE CREATION OF AN ACTIVE PUBLIC

“The *República* was called to Jury for the doctrines it emitted about federation and it was ABSOLVED,” blazed the headline to the 25 January 1831 edition of the *Verdadeiro Patriota*. The editor of the *Patriota* was angry because the *República* “insulted the Sacred and Inviolable Person of the Emperor with allusions to his private life” and was outraged at the suggestion that Brazil was not ruled by a government freely chosen by the people. The editor of the *Patriota* saved his most vitriolic rhetoric for the jurors who absolved the *República* of any wrongdoing, however. The *Patriota* claimed that “these Despots, bypassing legal terms, prostituted their most sacred responsibilities for gold, patronage, or partisanship.” The editor continued:

if they [jurors] decide their clean consciences, that is, if they decide cases through the judgment of their consciences based on evidence and the facts presented, [juries] would provide a productive institution. But, on the contrary, in the majority of the judgments, passion and parties have been the only law, capriciousness has triumphed, and the honor of the oppressed citizen has not been revenged.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 25 January 1831, #27.

To add insult to the injury of the jury's decision, a raucous group of "dozens of people were in the house of Jury on the day the *República* was judged." Obviously, for this editor, the liberty of the press had gotten out of hand. The press was being used "to destroy our customs, attack the sacredness of our families, insult the most Beneficent of Monarchs, satisfy shameful passions, and destroy the Heredity-Representative-Monarchal system!"<sup>2</sup> In a statement representative of many of the conservative editors' laments, the exasperated editor of the *Verdadeiro Patriota* exclaimed, "this, in the end, is the cause of the immense evils from which we suffer, and we will suffer while we endure this absolutism of opinion."<sup>3</sup>

There are many ironies in this diatribe by the editor of the *Verdadeiro Patriota*. It was ironic that a newspaper editor would criticize the liberty of the press. It was also ironic that an editor would believe a lenient jury that judged cases of press abuse was damaging for the country, calling its members "despots." Finally, it was ironic that an editor who depended on an active reading public would denounce that same public and begrudge the "absolutism of opinion" that had taken over the city.

By exploring these ironies, this chapter will illuminate two central aspects of First Empire print culture. First, liberal editors understood the liberty of the press to be the "keystone of the grand edifice of Representative Monarchies."<sup>4</sup> Beyond ensuring their livelihood, the liberty of the press provided editors the means to educate the public to take an active role in political discussion and guard against any attempt by the government to overturn hard-won political victories. Second, the examination of accusations and

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<sup>2</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 7 December 1830, #13.

<sup>3</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 25 January 1831, #27.

<sup>4</sup> *Verdadeiro Patriota*, 7 December 1830, #13.



detractions, honor, and patronage uncovers how the public used the press to engage in daily affairs. Arguments and ideas that were usually expressed personally and orally now reached hundreds more ears via the medium of the press. Newspapers provided the means for the public to interact in political and social affairs beyond their personal social circles, and readers increasingly took advantage of the opportunities afforded by the press. Editors created an active public that participated in political and social discussions via the press and was being readied to play an increasingly visible role in political affairs as the First Empire came to a close.

### ***The Liberty of the Press***

Newspapers of the period were full of long, and long-winded, expositions on the glory of the liberty of the press. It should not come as a surprise that those who made their living via the free press argued for a free press. It could also be safely assumed that the liberal editors were in this sense ‘preaching to the choir.’ Their readers read their newspapers expecting to find a defense of liberal principles and a vigilant examination of government policies. There was more to the discussion of the liberty of the press than simply a self-serving argument for sustaining the profession of newspaper editor, however. The editors believed in their role as watchdog over the interests of the people in the functioning of the state. They believed the liberty of the press went hand-in-hand with a constitutional monarchy. They believed, in fact, that the press was a necessary component of viable and sustainable representative government.

A clear pattern emerges from the reams of paper produced on the topic of the liberty of the press. For liberal editors, the most important aspect of the press was that it guaranteed all other rights. The *Aurora Fluminense* quoted the contemporary French thinker Benjamin Constant to make the point that “the liberty of the press is the only safeguard of the Citizenry.”<sup>5</sup> The *Astrea* echoed that sentiment with a passage from Ramon Salas: “The liberty of the press is the most important of all the liberties; it is the safeguard, the sentinel, the protector of all the liberties.”<sup>6</sup> The free press protected the liberty of the people in two ways. First, it watched appointed officials for any abuses of their offices. The military official Clemente José de Oliveira wrote “being my profession to wield the sword in defense of my country, I am impelled to take up the pen and narrate an [act of] injustice, arbitrariness, and despotism by the minister of war, Joaquim de Oliveira Alvares.”<sup>7</sup> Fighting for his country in the press was just as important as fighting for his country on the field of battle. Editors and contributors believed it was their solemn duty as active members of a constitutional monarchy to destroy “the plans of the enemies of the state [and] cure antique sicknesses in the administration of Justice.”<sup>8</sup> The editor of the *Aurora* mused “how will Patronage be countered without fear of the press?”<sup>9</sup>

The second way that the free press guaranteed the rights of citizens was by educating the reading public to actively participate in the functioning of the state. If, in theory, “the most insignificant citizen (if there is one in a constitutional nation) should be able to

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<sup>5</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 20 March 29, #168.

<sup>6</sup>*Astrea*, 20 October 29, #486.

<sup>7</sup>*Astrea*, 11 November 1828, #355.

<sup>8</sup>*Aurora, Fluminense*, 4 January 1828, #5.

<sup>9</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 4 January 1828, #5.

investigate [the government's] conduct and give it counsel," that citizen must be aware of the acts of government and be able to formulate opinions about the future of the state.<sup>10</sup>

Newspaper editors gladly took on the role of educator. Editors took their pedagogical charge seriously because their writings "exist in immediate contact with the people, transmitting to them the results of the profound deliberations of the authors."<sup>11</sup>

The most visible proof of the effectiveness of the editors' role as educators is letters to the editors. The increase in the number of newspapers meant that both editors and readers had more avenues for expression. And the public took advantage of this available forum: in 2,118 editions appeared 2,015 letters to the editor.<sup>12</sup> While only 15-20 editors were active at any given time, 1,571 readers penned letters to the editor over the three-year span of this study. A considerable number of citizens wrote to the newspapers repeatedly (286). In fact, 97 readers wrote 3 or more letters.<sup>13</sup> The public had bought into the system and embraced the newspaper as a viable means of entering public debate.

The argument for the liberty of the press now circles back on itself. The free press that acted as a watchdog to prevent abuses of power created an active public that also participated in that watchful vigilance. The editors envisioned that the development of this participatory public was a necessary element to the constitutional experiment of Brazil. This public was, in turn, also a powerful weapon to defend the rights of the people. "Despots tremble at [the] sight" of a free press, wrote the *Astrea*, because of its role as empowerer of

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<sup>10</sup>*Astrea*, 4 July 1826, #6.

<sup>11</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 29 February 1828, #21.

<sup>12</sup>Not all newspapers carried letters to the editor; therefore, many times a single edition carried multiple letters to the editor. In fact, the 3 March 1830 edition of the *Astrea* carried seven letters to the editor, while five different newspaper editions published six letters, and ten published five.

<sup>13</sup>One letter writer wrote forty-one different letters to the editor.

the people.<sup>14</sup> The *Jornal* echoed this sentiment with the statement “a despot is only able to rule over an ignorant people.”<sup>15</sup> The editors saw their role in society as dispellers of that ignorance.

### *Abuses of the Liberty of the Press*

Through testing the limits of accepted discourse, editors placed themselves on the front line of the battle to defend the role of the people in the governing of the state. The centrality of government criticism to the editors’ view of a free press necessarily opened the liberal editors to accusations of abuse against the press. Yet, they continued to argue against government policies, and the officials who crafted them, that threatened to limit the power of the people. The fourteen cases of abuses against the liberty of the press studied here help us better understand how the world of print operated in the First Empire and how the editors engaged their reading and listening publics in all aspects of the press.

As discussed in the introduction, Brazil had no printing press until 1808. The transplanted court immediately lifted the ban on printing to aid in the governance of its far-flung empire and the first press began operation.<sup>16</sup> When the press was only one month old, the Prince Regent Dom João implemented a strict practice of censorship to guard against the printing of anything, in the words of the royal decree, “against religion, the Government, and

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<sup>14</sup>*Astrea*, 11 May 1830, #566.

<sup>15</sup>*Jornal do Comércio*, 6 September 1828, #276.

<sup>16</sup>E. Barbosa Lima Sobrinho, “A Imprensa na Independência,” *História da Independência do Brasil*. José Montello ed., (Rio de Janeiro: A Casa do Livro, 1972), 13.

good behavior.”<sup>17</sup> Later in the same year the customs officials were ordered not to admit any printed material into Brazil without the official seal of the royal censor.<sup>18</sup> Censorship was lifted in 1821, directly before Dom João returned to Portugal. When his son Pedro elevated himself to the position of emperor, one of his first decrees was to limit the freedom of the press. With similar wording to the decree of 1808, the 1822 decree prohibited texts criticizing “religion, good behavior, the person of the Emperor, and public tranquility.”<sup>19</sup> A significant difference between the operation of the press before and after independence was that in the earlier period all printed information had to be approved by a long chain of government officials. After independence, censorship was applied after the material had been distributed. Still, the few presses that did operate during this period were heavily scrutinized.<sup>20</sup>

Censorship did not stop editors from using fiery rhetoric and personal attacks to argue for an end to corruption and more involvement of the people in the functioning of the state. One of the earliest cases of an abuse of the liberty of the press was in 1823. In late 1823, the constituent assembly was balking over Pedro’s plan to institute a moderating power in the constitution. When several newspaper editors questioned his motives and discussed his absolutist tendencies and continuing ties with Portugal, Pedro reacted impetuously. He

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<sup>17</sup>Royal decree 24 June 1808, in Sobrinho, “A Imprensa,” 17.

<sup>18</sup>Nelson Werneck Sodré, *História da Imprensa no Brasil*, (Rio de Janeiro: MAUAD, 1998), 17.

<sup>19</sup>Sodré, *História da Imprensa*, 47.

<sup>20</sup>Lawrence Hallewell, *Books in Brazil: A History of the Publishing Trade* (Methuen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1982), 33.

forcibly dissolved the assembly and arrested or deported the editors who spoke out against him.<sup>21</sup> In his statement justifying the dissolution of the assembly, Pedro wrote:

Authors [have] spread seditious doctrines by means of the Periodicals. They produced principles subversive of public order, attacking My Imperial Person, implying sinister procedures on the part of the Government, [and] spreading and fomenting division according to nationality.<sup>22</sup>

The dissolution of the constituent assembly and the persecution of liberal editors effectively ended free expression in the press of Rio until the beginning of the period under study here.

Legal action against the newspapers became more lax as the First Empire wore on and Pedro's popularity and control over the government waned. Newspapers helped cause this scenario and concomitantly benefited from it. Pedro's increasingly dire warnings about the dangers of the free press fell on deaf ears as his power base diminished. Editors capitalized on their newfound freedom by testing the limits of accepted discourse. Although editors were certainly brought before the courts to face charges of abuse against the liberty of the press (as we will see below), the majority of editors never faced government sanction and were free to wage their discursive battles as they saw fit.

One of the key lessons to be learned from an exploration of press accusations and trials was the importance placed on the jury system by the liberal editors. The 1824 constitution provided trials by jury, but the jury system was not instituted until 1827, and then only for cases of abusing the liberty of the press. Many editors wanted an expansion of

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<sup>21</sup>The Andrada brothers, including Pedro's advisor José Bonifácio da Silva de Andrada, were all involved in the production of the liberal newspaper the *Tamoyo*. They were exiled to France after their ideas fell out of favor with the immediate post-independence Court. Cipriano Barata, the editor of numerous journals in the Northeast of Brazil was incarcerated in Rio until just before the end of the First Empire. Marco Morel, *Cipriano Barata na Sentinela da Liberdade*, (Salvador: Academica de Letras da Bahia, 2001). Further, João Soares Lisboa, editor of the *Correio do Rio de Janeiro*, was exiled and imprisoned for his attacks on the powerful conservative factions of Rio in 1823. Isabel Lustosa, *Insultos Impressos: A Guerra dos Jornalistas na Independência, 1821-1823*, (São Paulo: Editora Schwarz, 2000), 174-226 and Sodré, *História da Imprensa*, 72.

<sup>22</sup>*Decretos e Leis do Brasil*, 24 November 1823.

the jury system, arguing that it should “protect our goods, property, and lives,” something that would not happen until after the abdication of the emperor.<sup>23</sup> The reason liberal editors supported the jury system was that it “weakened the influence and weight of the magistrates.”<sup>24</sup> Colonial Portuguese judges, trained at Coimbra University in Portugal and loyal only to the court in Lisbon, had garnered an unsavory reputation for arbitrary decisions and favoritism toward the interests of the mother country.<sup>25</sup> The *Aurora Fluminense* believed “all the world knows that we have had, and have, many Judges who dishonor the robes and damage society.”<sup>26</sup> Even more damaging, the same editor reported that “from all the angles of Brazil comes the complaints of the people against the indolence, corruption, and arbitrariness of the magistrates.”<sup>27</sup> Most of those complaints came from Rio itself, as the *Voz Fluminense* reported: “We all know well that current Judges are incapable of arbitrariness.”<sup>28</sup>

Even Brazilians who aspired to a career in jurisprudence were forced to study at Coimbra until the establishment of the two Brazilian law schools, in Olinda and São Paulo, in 1827.<sup>29</sup> The establishment of the law schools was closely followed by the newspapers in Rio, and all manner of information regarding the schools was reported. From enrollment numbers and names of graduating classes to even reading lists for core classes, readers in Rio

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<sup>23</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 17 February 1828, #130.

<sup>24</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 4 March 1830, #42.

<sup>25</sup>Stuart Schwartz, *Sovereignty and Society in Colonial Brazil: The High Court of Bahia and its Judges, 1609-1751*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973); Thomas Flory, *Judge and Jury in Imperial Brazil, 1808-1871: Social Control and Political Stability in the New State*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981).

<sup>26</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 13 July 1829, #212.

<sup>27</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 17 July 1829, #214.

<sup>28</sup>*Voz Fluminense*, 3 June 1830, #84.

<sup>29</sup>Andrew J. Kirkendall, *Class Mates: Male Student Culture and the Making of a Political Class in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002).

were kept abreast of this new institution. Elements of nativism are hard to mistake in this scenario. The establishment of the law schools provided for a home-grown magistrate that could argue for issues relevant to citizens of the new empire. Before those Brazilian-trained lawyers could establish a foothold in the magistrate, however, the jury system presented a valuable way to resist the influence of the politically-appointed judges. The jury system provided as close to a ‘natural law’ system as one could expect to find in a monarchy. The editors believed it was a place where “we judge ourselves, not only by written law, but by instinct, common sense, and the light of reason.”<sup>30</sup> As romantic as this sounds, it was true that the only politically-appointed member of the jury system was the Juiz de Direito, and even then his only role was to impose sentence after a jury made up of common citizens had determined the outcome of the case.

Liberal editors saw the jury system as a way to defeat corruption and patronage at high levels and defend the voice of the people in judicial affairs. As part of an ongoing effort to combat patronage, the *Aurora Fluminense* printed a series of articles accusing the *Censor Brasileiro*, a conservative newspaper, of pandering to the senate. The *Censor*, argued the *Aurora*, wanted to turn the senate into an aristocratic body—a very dangerous prospect for a representative monarchy.<sup>31</sup> The *Censor* denied this, of course, but did acknowledge that “we will always be on the field [of battle] to combat attacks, injuries, and invectives that are directed against the Senate.”<sup>32</sup> Closer to our point, a letter writer calling himself “The Enemy of Patronage and Cronyism” wrote in to the *Astrea* complaining about the favoritism

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<sup>30</sup>*Astrea*, 3 March 1829, #398.

<sup>31</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 21 April 1828, #36; *Aurora Fluminense*, 5 May 1828, #40.

<sup>32</sup>*Censor Brasileiro*, 24 April 1828, #8.



shown a recent political appointee in Porto Alegre, in the province of Rio Grande do Sul. He quoted the constitution, saying “any citizen is able to occupy Political, Civic, or Military office [based only on] his talents and virtues.” This author felt it his duty as a believer in the constitution to disclose any violation of the equal opportunities afforded by it.<sup>33</sup> Not surprisingly, soon after this letter appeared another correspondent wrote in to defend the recent appointee. This writer claimed to have “in my possession documents that will prove [the competency of the appointee] and reserve them for presentation to the Ministro da Fazenda.” Interestingly, the letter writer wrote that he found it curious that the original letter writer lived in Porto Alegre, where there was a printing shop and a newspaper, but he decided to send his letter to a newspaper of the court. “Is this a fair way of proceeding?” he wondered.<sup>34</sup> If the intention of the original author was to combat patronage as a whole, then it made sense to publish his letter at the seat of political power.

Before the jury reviewed a case of press abuse, the item had to be denounced. Anything printed—an article, letter, pamphlet, broadside, etc.—and publicly spoken words could be denounced. Potential violations ran the gamut from offenses against private persons, to attacking the sanctity of the Roman Catholic Church and the inviolability of the emperor. In theory, any citizen could denounce a violation of the liberty of the press. However, in nine of the fourteen cases under examination here, the promoter of justice denounced items. The promoter was chosen by potential jurors from their own ranks. The only requirement to be a member of the jury was to be an eligible elector. To be an elector in 1820s Rio was relatively easy. One had to be a free male head of the household, over

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<sup>33</sup>*Astrea*, 25 October 1828, #349.

<sup>34</sup>*Astrea*, 8 November 1828, #354.

twenty-five, with an annual income over two hundred milreis a year (a paltry sum).<sup>35</sup> To be eligible for the position of promoter, in addition to the requirements to be an elector, the candidate had to be either trained in law or be a practicing lawyer.<sup>36</sup>

The liberal editors felt the promoter who was in office for most of our period was in the pocket of the ministry, even though he was not appointed. From late 1826 to early 1829 the promoter for Rio de Janeiro was João Jozé da Veiga. Early in his career as promoter, Veiga garnered a reputation among the liberal editors for being vindictive about who and what he decided violated the liberty of the press. The *Astrea* in particular had a running argument with the promoter throughout his entire tenure. João Clemente Vieira Souto of the *Astrea* believed that the promoter had a personal reason for coming after him. He may be right; during promoter Veiga's tenure, only three articles or letters *not* published in the *Astrea* were denounced. For the *Astrea*, not only was this an indication that the promoter "has an exquisite desire to see us behind bars" but that other editors had powerful friends who helped them avoid the promoter's gaze.<sup>37</sup> The *Astrea* believed João Maria da Costa of the *Gazeta do Brasil* was particularly guilty of abuses against the liberty of the press. Can it be inferred, the *Astrea* mused, "that the *Gazeta do Brasil* has great Patrons and that the *Astrea* does not have them, nor wants them, and detests them?"<sup>38</sup> Even though he felt that the promoter "has tried and will try to quiet us," the editor of the *Astrea* felt that the jurors would be able see through to the facts of the case and vindicate the wrongly accused.<sup>39</sup> The

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<sup>35</sup>Flory, *Judge and Jury*, 118.

<sup>36</sup>*Astrea*, 21 October 1830, #629; *Astrea*, 23 October 1830, #630.

<sup>37</sup>*Astrea*, 15 December 1827, #223.

<sup>38</sup>*Astrea*, 24 Nov 1827, #215.

<sup>39</sup>*Astrea*, 12 Feb 1828, #245.

jurors had to keep an eye on the promoter, however, since “he wants to use us as his instruments.”<sup>40</sup>

Once denounced by the promoter, the case was sent to the first jury. The role of the first jury was to establish whether there were grounds for a trial. The seven members did not hear testimony, nor did they judge the guilt of the accused. If the first jury believed the case merited further scrutiny, it was sent to the second jury. Members of the second jury did hear testimony and reviewed documents submitted by both parties. Sometimes the newspapers were involved at this point. Twice, the employees of the *Astrea* print shop were required to go to the house of the Juiz de Direito (the politically-appointed presiding judge) to give testimony.<sup>41</sup> In the second jury, the accused and the accusers were allowed to have proxies and/or lawyers with them at trial. The jurors for the second trial were chosen in the same way as the group for the first trial, but those serving on the second trial of a particular case could not have served on the first trial of the same case.

In the second jury the Juiz de Direito acted in an observatory role. It was his duty to make sure there were no irregularities in the proceedings. After the jury deliberated, the Juiz de Direito asked the jurors three questions: 1, does the accused document violate X article of the liberty of the press laws; 2, is the accused author responsible for the violation; 3, does the jury have recommendations for punishment. An absolute majority had to agree on the first two questions. Although the system of two juries with different procedures for each was complicated, in many ways the system was remarkable for the control that the people had over the institution. In this case, the ‘people’ was limited to eligible electors, but considering

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<sup>40</sup>*Astrea*, 20 May 1828, #284.

<sup>41</sup>*Astrea*, 24 November 1827, #215; *Astrea*, 12 January 1828, #234.

that the lone politically-appointed member had only a procedural role, the jury system was quite liberal. It is easy to see how the liberal newspaper editors believed the principle of the jury system was integral to a constitutional monarchy. One would think that newspaper editors would decry an institution that existed to judge them, since it held the power to place them in jail, send them into internal exile, or levy fines. In fact, the editors believed the jury system “shield[s] the writers from the pernicious oppression of those who govern.”<sup>42</sup>

The transparency of the First Empire jury system enabled editors and readers to keep close tabs on the workings of the promoter and the two juries. Editors and readers followed with interest all the cases under study here and commonly conducted their own trials in the court of public opinion. The *Astrea* complained when the letter from Antonio Que-Casa was denounced by the promoter. The editor lamented, “from the day of publication of the accused article to the day it was denounced passed 167 days or 5 months and 14 days!!!” If it was so dangerous, the editor of the *Astrea* implied, then the promoter did the nation a disservice by not accusing it earlier.<sup>43</sup> In fact, Antonio Que-Casa’s letter did not take the longest from publication to trial. A letter from Amigo da Humanidade published in *Astrea* 9 October 1827 did not go to trial until 29 April 1828—202 days. The average length of time between publication and trial was 99 days, with the shortest being 12 days. This gap in time allowed for numerous events to occur. First, the article could be reprinted after it was denounced and before it stood trial. This certainly was not in the spirit of the law; a denounced article may have garnered more attention simply because it was denounced,

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<sup>42</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 11 February 1829, #152.

<sup>43</sup>The original letter appeared in the *Astrea*, 26 May 1827, #140, which indicates that 201 days passed between the first publication and the trial date of 15 December 1827. Whatever the exact count of days, enough time had passed to validate the editor’s sentiment. *Astrea*, 13 December 1827, #222.

thereby defeating the purpose of the denunciation. The letter by Antonio Que-Casa falls into this category. This letter implied that the constitution was now detested by its authors. The promoter argued that Pedro wrote the constitution, therefore the letter attacked the emperor. After the letter was denounced by the promoter, the *Astrea* reprinted the entire original letter with commentary. The *Astrea*'s argument, essentially, was that Pedro did not write the constitution. To do so would have been an act of despotism.<sup>44</sup> To make the article even more accessible, the newspaper *L'Echo de l' Amerique du Sud* translated the *Astrea*'s defense of Antonio Que-Casa into French.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, when the promoter denounced the *Espelho Diamantino*'s farcical last will and testament of a monkey that was buried in holy ground, the *Astrea* reprinted that as well. This time, however, the *Astrea* published the article after its author had been acquitted. The only plausible reason for reprinting the article was to point out the partiality and arbitrariness of the promoter. While the point of the original article was to expose the excesses of religion and the waste of public funds, the *Astrea* had different motives for republishing it.<sup>46</sup>

After the article or letter was sent to jury, authors commonly pleaded their cases before the tribunal of public opinion before the trial date. Also, editors of liberal newspapers often weighed in with their thoughts before the trial. In the selection of jury members there was no provision to recuse a jury member because he had already formed an opinion on the case. Therefore, it was in the accused's best interests to publish as much information before the trial date as possible.

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<sup>44</sup>*Astrea*, 13 December 1827, #222.

<sup>45</sup>*L'Echo de l' Amerique du Sud*, 15 December 1827, #48.

<sup>46</sup>*Astrea*, 20 December 1827, #225.

The letter from the Amigo da Humanidade presents a classic case where a delay can be costly. As stated above, 202 days elapsed between the date of first publication and the date of the trial. The original letter concerned religious celibacy, and it was to be tried for violating articles five and ten of the laws governing the liberty of the press: attacking the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church and attacking Christian moral systems, respectively. Before the trial date, the author of the original letter wrote a new letter to the same newspaper arguing his case. He explained that “the impartiality of the Judges will assess the innocence of my assertions, offspring of Religious and Patriotic sentiments that animate me as a Brazilian.”<sup>47</sup> The Amigo da Humanidade put the promoter on the defensive by associating his ideas concerning religion with the patriotic sentiment of being a Brazilian. In effect, he challenged the jurors to find him guilty. If they did, they were un-Brazilian. He was acquitted.

The accused were not the only ones to pen letters to the editor about ongoing trials. Several different newspapers carried numerous letters from interested authors who wanted to add their thoughts to ongoing discussions. It was not uncommon for discussions of the same case to carry on in several different journals. While each newspaper had a base of subscribers, newspapers were bought and sold in the same locations, and they were probably read aloud in the same locations as well. Newspaper editors maintained dialogues with other editors with only the briefest of references to their opponent’s arguments. They assumed that their audience was already familiar with the arguments.

Editors and readers used the judicial system to promote their argument for an increased role for the people in the operation of the state. Instead of lamenting the curbs on

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<sup>47</sup>*Astrea*, 26 April 1828, #275.

their freedom to write, editors were quick to point out the benefits of a jury system and kept close tabs on trials. The press became a forum where editors and readers alike aired concerns of injustice and presented defenses independent of the official mechanisms of the state.

### *The Case of Balthazar and Albino*

One case in particular illustrates the many twists and turns of the press and the courts and also highlights how letter writers used the press to combat patronage. In February of 1828, Balthazar Pinto dos Reis wrote a letter to the editor of the *Astrea*. It seems that Balthazar was involved in some manner with the procurement of food for the horses of the mounted cavalry division of the military in Rio de Janeiro. In his letter, he responded to an official report written by the commissary of the army, Albino Gomes Guerra de Aguiar. Albino's report detailed the expenditures of the commissary for the purchase of foodstuffs for the mounted cavalry. Balthazar's letter essentially accused Albino of skimming off the top. He alleged that the amount expended on food for the mounted cavalry rose by five contos de reis (a considerable sum) from 1824 to 1827. The letter from Balthazar denounced "to the government the atrocious theft [Albino] committed against the nation."<sup>48</sup> This short letter to the editor, appearing on the last page of the most radical liberal newspaper in the capital at that time, sparked numerous courtroom battles, street brawls, and the production of reams of newspapers by both supporters and detractors over the next two and a half years.

Newspapers made it possible for members of the Rio community to have their voice heard in matters of state. Albino was a public official appointed by the emperor, yet the

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<sup>48</sup>*Astrea*, 19 February 1828, #248.

“people,” represented in this case by numerous authors of letters to the editor, were able to broach questions about his integrity and call for his suspension or dismissal. Initially, most editors and readers sided with Balthazar and all called on Albino to produce the documentation that would put an end to accusations of graft.<sup>49</sup> “How is it that a month could pass,” wrote the editor of the *Luz Brasileiro*, “then a semester, then an entire year without Sr. Albino producing [his] accounts?”<sup>50</sup> A letter writer calling himself “The Curious One” wrote to the *Aurora Fluminense* that Albino should be suspended until he produced his account books.<sup>51</sup> When the legislature called upon Albino to produce his books, the commissary produced copies of the originals prompting one letter writer to accuse Albino of manipulating public records to cover a crime.<sup>52</sup> While one letter writer derided Albino’s profession of innocence by declaring “nothing is so easy as to write a long letter saying you are not a liar,” it was the ease of getting a letter published that helped newspapers editors create an active public.

The promoter for cases of abuses of the liberty of the press was not moved by public support for Balthazar. Within two weeks of the original appearance of Balthazar’s letter, the promoter denounced the letter and sent it to the first jury. The first jury believed there was enough evidence to send the case to the second jury. The Juiz de Direito in the second jury asked the usual questions to the jury, indicating that the members should judge the case on whether Balthazar violated article eleven of the liberty of the press laws: did the document

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<sup>49</sup>One industrious letter writer found that Albino had been providing military procurement contracts to his son since 1822. The contracts must have been for “learning how to read,” the author mused, “since he was only thirteen or fourteen years old” at the time. *Luz Brasileira*, 14 April 1830, #46.

<sup>50</sup>*Luz Brasileira*, 27 March 1830, #41.

<sup>51</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 12 July 1830, #360.

<sup>52</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 30 August 1830, #381.



attack a public official while he was operating within the bounds of his position. The jury came back with an unusual statement. They believed that the accused letter did violate the liberty of the press, but it did not violate article eleven. Rather, Balthazar's letter injured a citizen—article thirteen. The Juiz de Direito accepted the decision and imposed a penalty of 50\$000 reis and “the indemnification of damages and the reparation of injuries.” Balthazar was also assessed the cost of the trials.<sup>53</sup> Interestingly, three members of the second jury abstained from the vote. Manoel Carreiro de Campos, one of those who abstained, wrote a letter to the *Astrea* in the next week to justify his position. He believed that Balthazar violated article eleven, not thirteen, and felt the majority of the jury had erred in their judgment.<sup>54</sup>

Eight months after the second jury declared its verdict, a new panel of judges reviewed the case. The Accordão da Relação, or appeals court, overturned the decision of the second jury and the three appointed judges imposed their own ruling on the case. They decided, without hearing any evidence, that Balthazar had violated article eleven, not article thirteen. The penalty for violating article eleven was much more severe; Balthazar was sentenced to six months in jail, a fine of 400\$000 and indemnisation.<sup>55</sup> Interestingly, the penalty also included the suppression of all copies of the original article. This was hardly possible considering the amount of interest the case had garnered up to this point. It is also lucky for us that the penalty was not completely realized.

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<sup>53</sup>*Astrea*, 29 April 1828, #276.

<sup>54</sup>*Astrea*, 3 April 1828, #278.

<sup>55</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 3 December 1828, #125.

The decision of the appeals court drew a firestorm of comments from liberal editors. The main concern was that the decision nullified the work of the chosen citizens who sat on the second jury. To disregard the verdict “that the Jurors in their intimate conscience gave regarding the case is to abuse the meaning of the law and to show hostile deliberation against an Institution that protects our liberties.”<sup>56</sup> Many writers believed the decision of the appeals court was itself a travesty of justice. The *Aurora* wrote:

When we see Magistrates who judge this way we should all fear the administration of Justice and implore our Representatives to focus their attention on our threatened liberties. The Jury, and the Liberty of the Press, should occupy the attention of the Legislators of Brazil; without them the Constitution is a dead letter, and powerful are the enemies who make war against these two precious Institutions.<sup>57</sup>

The liberal editors viewed the jury system as a protector of rights against the arbitrariness, corruption, and patronage of the government. Even Balthazar wrote in to the *Aurora* to protest the decision of the appeals court. He believed that his rights were being infringed, especially because the deliberations of the appeals court took place behind closed doors. He ended his letter with the ominous statement: what they do “today for me” they may do the same “tomorrow for you.”<sup>58</sup> In this hotly contested period, the jury had become a flashpoint for the role of the people in the political culture of Rio de Janeiro.

The liberal editors argued that the appeals court had overstepped its authority. It was allowed to decide only one question: was the decision by the jury valid or invalid. The decision could only be ruled invalid if either there was some improper procedures (i.e. the

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<sup>56</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 17 December 1828, #130.

<sup>57</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 17 August 1829, #227.

<sup>58</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 15 December 1828, 129.

defendant was deprived of his rights) or the Juiz de Direito had imposed an improper sentence. If the decision was ruled invalid, it would be sent back for a new trial. The appeals court “does not have the authority to reform the sentence, since such judgment is diametrically opposed to the institution and nature of the jury.”<sup>59</sup> More troubling for the liberal editors of Rio, there was some discussion that the appeals court could begin reviewing *all* decisions by the juries. As one correspondent of the *Aurora* put it, “here ends the independence of the jury.”<sup>60</sup>

The decision of the appeals court was reviewed by a commission hastily established by the legislature: the commission of criminal justice. This commission ruled that the judges who sat on the appeals court were “responsible for abusing their power.”<sup>61</sup> This decision, coupled with public outrage expressed in the newspapers, forced a meeting of the supreme tribunal of justice, the highest arbiter of court decisions in the empire. The *Aurora* reported that a large number of onlookers showed up to witness the hearings. The issue of the “Independence of the Jury,” the editor wrote, “was enough to attract to the sessions a much larger concourse of spectators than normal.”<sup>62</sup> One correspondent put the entire affair into perspective: “It was not the desire to see what happened in the case of Balthazar and Albino that caused me to leave my house yesterday and go to where the Supreme Tribunal of Justice met. [Rather,] it was the liberty of the press and the independence of the jury.”<sup>63</sup> The tribunal decided that the appeals court did not have the jurisdiction to impose a new sentence

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<sup>59</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 26 August 1829, #231.

<sup>60</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 7 August 1829, #223.

<sup>61</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 26 August 1829, #231.

<sup>62</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 25 November 1829, #270.

<sup>63</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 20 November 1829, #268.

on the accused, and that it erred in its overzealous administration of justice. For the liberal editors, this decision confirmed “the general supposition that it is difficult for men educated in the doctrines of the ancient system to accommodate themselves to new ideas.”<sup>64</sup>

The attention that the liberal editors paid to the ruling of the appeals court had little to do with the plight of Balthazar. Rather, they saw the seemingly arbitrary decision of the appeals court as a further example of favoritism, corruption, and patronage in high places. The liberal editors feared any erosion of the liberty of the press and the independence of the jury. The *Aurora* believed that if the appeals court became enabled to review all cases, the jury will “be reduced to a formula that only protects those for whom protection is not necessary.”<sup>65</sup> When the decision from the supreme tribunal of justice was passed down and the judges were reprimanded, the same newspaper believed it was good that the judges from the appeals court were punished, but “well we know, on the other hand, the confidence that these Senhores have in the spirit of class that protects them from all punishment.”<sup>66</sup>

The case of Balthazar and Albino ended where it began, with accusations of misuse of public funds by the commissary of the army. Insinuating protection in high places, the *Aurora* reported that “Albino refuses to release the manifest, receipts, and [account] books of the Commissary.” The editor wondered, “Why is he not already sequestered, as the fiscal laws ordain?”<sup>67</sup> While it was wishful thinking to see Albino imprisoned, it was not long before Albino’s graft was exposed to the public. On 25 June 1830 Deputy Custodio Dias sent a requirement to the legislature proposing that the government ask for receipts for all the

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<sup>64</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 25 November 1829, #270.

<sup>65</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 11 Feb 1829, #152.

<sup>66</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 26 August 1829, #231.

<sup>67</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 30 June 1830, #355.

materials purchased by Albino as commissary of the army. It appears that another deputy, Clemente Pereira, had uncovered evidence that Albino inserted forged receipts for the missing funds into the official record books after Balthazar's first accusation. In a self-congratulatory tone that befitted the long, tortuous path of Balthazar and Albino, the *Aurora* ended its discussion with: "We see that the institution [liberty of the press] has finally triumphed. The impunity of thieves is not able to continue much longer when everyday the free press tears the veil that covers these shameful affairs."<sup>68</sup>

One effect the case of Balthazar and Albino did have was to expose the importance of the jury system to the legislature. It also highlighted the faults of the existing laws that regulated the liberty of the press. The cornerstone of the 1830 legislative session was passage of the new criminal code. The 1830 liberty of the press laws were more descriptive in terms of what was illegal, but they were not substantially changed. The monetary penalties were increased across the board, sometimes ten-fold. This is not surprising considering the inflation and devaluation of the *real* in the last few years of Pedro's reign. Besides taking into account new technologies (caricatures), the only substantial difference was an inclusion of what was *not* considered an abuse of the press. The first of these was rather innocuous: "reasonable analysis of the principles and uses of religion" was now not considered an abuse. The next item that was newly considered legal was a great boon to all liberal writers: "reasonable analysis of the constitution, without attacking its fundamental bases and without provoking disobedience to it and censure of the acts of government and public administration, without attacking their legal authority." Since this category encapsulated the majority of accusations under the earlier regulation, the changing of this

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<sup>68</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 2 July 1830, #356.

article could be interpreted as a successful blow for the free expression of ideas. A key change in the new law was a direct consequence of Balthazar's trial. Now, jurors were able to decide which article of law the denounced document abused, as opposed to simply agreeing with the promoter's judgment or not.

The case of Balthazar and Albino shows us how the press had become a viable mechanism for countering the arbitrariness of government officials. It also shows us how the press made it possible for the public to take an active role in political affairs. Members of the public used the press to air grievances, protest wrongdoing, and defend themselves and their actions. Late in the case of Balthazar and Albino, Albino submitted several supporting letters, including one from Bento Barrozo Pereira, the minister of war, all attesting to his innocence.<sup>69</sup> The jury may have found Balthazar guilty, but Albino still felt it necessary to press his case in front of the tribunal of the public. Because the press had become such a powerful tool for the expression of ideas, Albino was both enabled and required to use the press to defend himself.

### ***Honor***

As we saw with the case of Balthazar and Albino, the majority of cases of press abuse that went to trial concerned letters to the editor. Letters were more likely to face official action because they dealt with specifics. While politics dominated letters (just as it did

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<sup>69</sup>*Astrea*, 1 May 1828, #277.

articles), letter writers were also concerned with daily life.<sup>70</sup> Letter writers were much more likely than editors to discuss issues of crime, education, medicine, or religion. Instead of discussing abstract political theories, letter writers pointed out corruption in high official posts or attacked individuals for perceived wrongdoing. One subject stands out in letters to the editor and helps us understand what was important enough to risk official sanction and public condemnation. Discussions of honor indicate that the press provided a valued forum for airing personal grievances and conducting affairs of high society. In their discussion of honor, letter writers took advantage of two key aspects of the press: longevity and reach. Never before could a self-perceived victim have pleaded his case before hundreds of his peers with an immutable record of events.

Rio was still a small enough town that an accusation against someone's professional conduct or personal integrity could have had real effect. In a social milieu where personal connections ensured economic and political success, honor was all-important. A full fifteen percent of topics of letters to the editor concerned defending the author's honor.<sup>71</sup> There was a sense that not only was the press an acceptable arena for defending one's honor, sometimes it was an essential arena. Even though Apolinario José Dias Guimarães was hesitant to "submit to the Judgment of Public Sentiment [his] weak arguments," he "values nothing more than his honor, and nothing would incite [his] pen except to refute the falsities" printed about him.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup>40% of letters to the editor concerned politics. In comparison, 62% of articles focused on politics. Letters to the editor were much more likely to focus on social issues than articles: 27% (letters) to 11% (articles).

<sup>71</sup>See appendix 3 for a break down of topics. French newspapers in this general period, according to William Reddy, were also "frequently preoccupied with issues of honor and shame." William M. Reddy, "Condottieri of the Pen: Journalists and the Public Sphere in Postrevolutionary France (1815-1850)," *The American Historical Review*, 99 no. 5, (December 1994): 1552.

<sup>72</sup>*Jornal do Comércio*. 16 August 1828. #258.

The common conception of affairs of honor in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are duels between gentlemen combatants and their seconds.<sup>73</sup> From this early conception, many historians of the Americas have gone beyond the study of the elite to examine the “play” of honor among such diverse groups as urban plebeians, slaves, and rural cow punchers.<sup>74</sup> Honor is a culturally-specific dialogue where words, actions, and appearances communicate social standing through a complex system of implicit understandings. According to Julian Pitt-Rivers, “honor is a sentiment, a manifestation of this sentiment in conduct, and the evaluation of this conduct by others.”<sup>75</sup> Honor is above all public.<sup>76</sup> A slight can be ignored in a private setting or a damning secret can be kept hidden, but if realized by the public appropriate steps must be taken.<sup>77</sup> Without the key ingredient of public-ness, honor would only be a bizarre ritual, impossible to understand. Implied by all

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<sup>73</sup>Modern case studies of honor find many roots in Bertram Wyatt-Brown’s pathbreaking study of honor in the Old South. In that work, the classic conception of the landed elite dueling over perceived slights to family honor looms large. *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

<sup>74</sup>Lyman Johnson and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera, eds., *Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), Sarah Chambers, *From Subjects to Citizens: Honor, Gender, and Politics in Arequipa, Peru, 1780-1854*, (University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), William M. Reddy, *The Invisible Code: Honor and Sentiment in Postrevolutionary France, 1814-1848*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), R. Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994). For discussions of honor in various contexts, see Robert A. Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993 ); Kevin McAleer, *Dueling: The Cult of Honor in Fin-de-Siècle Germany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994 ) and Ute Frevert, *Men of Honour: A Social and Cultural History of the Duel* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

<sup>75</sup>Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Honor,” *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol. 6, 503-510.

<sup>76</sup>According to Pitt-Rivers, “honor is only irrevocably committed by attitudes expressed in the presence of witnesses, the representatives of public opinion.” Julian Pitt-Rivers, *The Fate of Shechem: Or, the Politics of Sex: Essays in the Anthropology of the Mediterranean*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 6.

<sup>77</sup>This concept is reinforced by Chasteen’s study of the late-nineteenth century Brazilian/Uruguayan borderlands. For the rural borderlanders, “demonstration was vital, because the state of one’s honor did not depend on an inner voice, but on public reputation.” John Charles Chasteen, “Violence for Show: Knife Dueling on a Nineteenth-Century Cattle Frontier,” *The Problem of Order in Changing Societies*, Lyman L. Johnson, ed., (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1990), 54.



these studies, though rarely explicitly stated, is that honor is personal. It was necessary to know one's attacker to defend one's honor. In 1820s Rio, the newspapers were the vehicle for that defense of honor. The press became a public tribunal. Grievances were aired; actions were justified; defenses were made.

At first glance, it appears that the newspapers could not provide the customary conditions for the "play" of honor. On one hand, the press was certainly public. In fact, it was the most public vehicle of expression available in the early nineteenth century. Everyone knew its power and feared its reach. But on the other hand, newspapers were the opposite of personal. The editors rarely signed their writings, and the vast majority of letters to the editor were pseudonymous. Denouncing a pseudonymous letter to the promoter was a far cry from even issuing a challenge. Did the growing viability of the press as a medium of public expression change the rules of honor? If, as Burkholder argues, by the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries public men took their affairs of honor to the courts, what role, if any, did the newspapers play in the affairs of honor?<sup>78</sup>

The reach and permanence of printed accusations carried weight that was both respected and feared. Theoretically, they were read or heard by thousands of people, and they live on indefinitely in print. Indeed, how else would we know that João Teixeira de Magalhães was late in paying his debts if he was not accused by "Hum Lezado" in a Rio newspaper?<sup>79</sup> The *Aurora Fluminense* believed that the press held advantages over spoken

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<sup>78</sup>Mark A Burkholder, "Honor and Honors in Colonial Spanish America," *Faces of Honor: Sex, Shame, and Violence in Colonial Latin America*, Lyman Johnson and Sonya Lipsett-Rivera, eds., (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1998), 44. For recent works that discuss honor in the press, see: Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); and Jeffrey K. Sawyer, *Printed Poison: Pamphlet Propaganda, Faction Politics, and the Public Sphere in Early Seventeenth-Century France*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).

<sup>79</sup>*Jornal do Comércio*, 14 April 1828, #158.

accusations and denouncements. The “permanence of the document” helped victims gain justice from their accuser.<sup>80</sup> Likewise, the *Astrea* opined that when spoken, calumny was hard to destroy. It was impossible to “speak with or present evidence to everyone; [the victim] is obliged to suffer and lose his honor and credit with no means of defense.”<sup>81</sup> While the press provided the means to publicly defend a letter writer in front of thousands of people, not all victims saw the same benefits to the printed accusations. Joaquim Francisco das Chagas Catete believed that in print “an insolent and slanderous suggestion is a beast that will be tamed only by the rigor of punishment.”<sup>82</sup> For someone like João de Almeida Ferrão, who “valued above all his honor,” there was no choice of whether to respond to a slight or not. It was his “obligation to appear in front of the respectable public” and defend himself.<sup>83</sup>

A central element of the play of honor was that affairs of honor were personal. While at first glance it would appear the press was, by its nature, impersonal, letter writers made sure their discussions of honor struck a personal note. The overwhelming majority (eighty-three percent) of letters to the editor were pseudonymous, yet fifty-eight percent of letters that dealt with affairs of honor were proudly signed.<sup>84</sup> This drastic difference indicates that letter writers used their names sparingly and with clear intent.<sup>85</sup> Newspaper editors also used

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<sup>80</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 7 October 1829, #249.

<sup>81</sup> *Astrea*, 5 December 1829, #506.

<sup>82</sup> *Astrea*, 4 November 1828, #352.

<sup>83</sup> *Astrea*, 16 January 1830, #522.

<sup>84</sup> The other anomalous category contained letters discussing accusations of abuse of the liberty of the press (50%). This statistic seems to fit into the overall point that authors used their names sparingly and pointedly.

<sup>85</sup> Joanne Freeman, in her study of early U.S. newspapers, claims that even pseudonyms were known in the insular world of early nineteenth-century Atlantic World urban enclaves. She argues that the transparency of the concealed names allowed for authors to strike a pointed blow but avoid responsibility in the courts. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor*, 129. In Brazil, the responsibility for any abuses of the press fell on not only the author of the offensive piece; the printer, editor (if it was printed in a journal), and the seller were all held

or reserved their names for effect. The conservative and moderate editors never used their real names in their newspapers. Most of their names were known to the public, but the editors preferred to hide behind the seeming anonymity of the press. Often, in the masthead an interested reader could note that loose copies of the newspaper were available for sale in the home of the editor, although no name or address was provided. This lends further credence to the idea that Rio was a small enclave where it would be a simple matter to discover the identity and abode of the editor of the *Aurora Fluminense*, for example. The most radical of the liberal newspaper editors all signed their names to their papers, however. João Clemente Vieira Souto of the *Astrea*, Francisco das Chagas de Oliveira of the *Tribuna do Povo*, and Antonio Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* made a point of attaching their names to their ideas. For them, newspapers were not only public, they were personal.

The public-ness of the press and its ability to reach hundreds of people made newspapers a powerful forum for letter writers to reclaim their honor. For example, results of cases of abuse were not automatically printed in the newspapers. Interested editors reported many of the cases, but those who were originally slandered often made public the results of the denouncement they made to the promoter. This was why Lieutenant Antonio Machadoa reported the successful conclusion of his case against Francisco Vieira de Souza.<sup>86</sup> Even though he had won the case in the courts, Machadoa took the extra step to pronounce

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accountable for the damage, but not at the same time. If the author's name was not known, and it was a pamphlet, then the printer was held liable. If it was printed in an edited journal, then the editor and not the printer was liable. The seller was to be held accountable if neither the author's, editor's, nor printer's name was known. To this end, it was decreed that every printed document should carry the name of, at the very least, the typography house where it was printed, along with the date and place of publication. While this is a definite stroke of fortune for the researcher, it did nothing to curb the frequency with which authors used pseudonyms.

<sup>86</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 2 September 1829, #234.

the verdict publicly, thereby punishing his attacker again. It was one thing for the attacker to be punished by the court; it was another thing for the attacker to be judged by the public.

Letter writers also used the press to publicly and personally defend a position or rebut an accusation. When José d'Araujo Rozo was criticized for not deserving his recently-awarded *Ordem de Christo*, a title of nobility given by the Emperor, he responded with letters of support. He did not write to “satisfy writers who judge merits of honorable men, but [rather] for the satisfaction of my friends.” In all, he submitted fourteen letters supporting his position. The assembled names included such dignitaries as the consuls of France and England, the minister of the empire, Brigadier General Francisco de Lima e Silva, and, perhaps most notably, the swashbuckling hero of Brazilian independence, Lord Cochrane. This avalanche of printed support created an aura of untouchable respect. From this exalted position, the author felt justified to claim that “those who oppress the honor of others without documents or any proof, should be looked down upon with indignation.”<sup>87</sup>

The press had become the new battlefield for the affairs of honor. Many of the same rules applied as in the more familiar scenario of the courtly drawing room or the fields of Weehawken, but other ones were changed. The press fulfilled the element of public-ness to a degree never before achieved in Brazil. Quite suddenly, an attack by one person on another could conceivably be read by hundreds or thousands of people, and the accusation lives on in perpetuity. The press raised the stakes, and replies became that much more important. Authors recognized and respected the power of the press. The court system did not undermine the very important personal rituals of honor; rather, the courts were used in conjunction with the newspapers to expose dishonorable action and defend individual honor.

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<sup>87</sup> *Verdadeiro Patriota*, 24 December 1830, #18.

The expression and defense of honor in both the courts and the press shows the increasing engagement of the populace with public affairs.

### *The Affair of Látego and Saturnino*

The case of Balthazar and Albino outlined above led to a related affair of honor between two letter writers, Látego and Saturnino. The long and varied path of their printed accusations and defenses shows us how letter writers had come to see the press as not only a respected arena to air social grievances, but also a necessary forum for defending personal honor.

In May of 1828 the *Aurora Fluminense* published a letter from Látego Ciceronis—a pseudonym [one who suffers from eloquence]. In this letter, Látego accused a lawyer, Saturnino de Souza e Oliveira, of taking up Balthazar's case and then dropping it due to outside pressure. Saturnino dropped the case, according to Látego, "only because a certain friend asked him to open his hand and let it go." "This, Senhores," Látego continued, "is the honor, bravery, and courage of the liberals of our day!!" Látego accused Saturnino of being a liberal only after a few bottles of wine, and he suggested that Saturnino's clients should search for a different lawyer.<sup>88</sup> This was not a matter to be taken lightly. Látego accused a professional in the court of public opinion of shirking his duty to a client because of the influence of powerful people. Látego attacked Saturnino's honor, his social position, and even his political persuasion. To retain any sort of respect in the city, Saturnino was bound to reply.

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<sup>88</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 5 May 1828, #40.

Saturnino felt that the accusations of the masked Látego deserved a response in kind. In the very next edition of the *Aurora Fluminense*, Saturnino penned a long letter explaining his role in Balthazar's defense. According to him, Saturnino was approached by Balthazar's brother-in-law to defend the accused. Saturnino agreed to look over the case and give his recommendation. After examining the case, Saturnino determined that it was a lost cause. He wrote: "[Balthazar,] blinded by passion, wrote what he could not prove. Snr. Albino's documents proved him wrong and challenged him to prove his case; when he was called to do this he did not."<sup>89</sup> In a later letter, Saturnino declared that "no intelligent man can find [in Balthazar's accusation] more than the desire for vengeance for having been excluded from the sale of food for the cavalry."<sup>90</sup> To Saturnino's legal mind this was a cut and dry case. There was nothing to defend. In fact, if he had defended Balthazar in public, Saturnino would have damaged his reputation. "How is it not a slap in the face," he wrote, "for a lawyer to lose in public?" Thinking practically, Saturnino concluded, "Who has a reputation does not want to expose it."<sup>91</sup> While this may seem a cynical approach to trial law, Saturnino was acting within the bounds of public masculine honor in nineteenth-century Brazil. A lawyer made a name for himself through eloquent and insightful oration, especially in cases of political theory.<sup>92</sup> For Saturnino to expose himself in public in a case that, to him, was a simple one of slander, would have put him in a precarious position. Obviously, Saturnino's

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<sup>89</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 9 May 1828, #41.

<sup>90</sup>*Jornal do Comércio*, 3 Feb 1829, #394.

<sup>91</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 9 May 1828, #41.

<sup>92</sup>For the importance of eloquence and public oration, see Jeffrey D. Needell "Party Formation and State-Making: The Conservative Party and the Reconstruction of the Brazilian State, 1831-1840," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 81 no.2, (2001).

reputation was more important to him than defending Balthazar; the case simply was not worth the risk for Saturnino.

It *was* worth the risk for Saturnino, however, to defend his honor in the press. His first move, as we have seen, was to respond to the affront in kind. He was attacked in the press, so he defended himself on the same field of battle. The printed response was not his only weapon, however. His next move was to denounce Látego to the promoter for an attack against a citizen. In the 12 May 1828 edition of the *Aurora Fluminense* Saturnino explained that he only accused the letter to discover the name of the letter writer. He used the court system to supply him with the tools necessary for the defense of his honor: in this case the name of his accuser. Presumably, the promoter called the editor of the *Aurora Fluminense* to his house and forced him to disclose the real name of the letter writer. This had been tried before with the *Astrea* in reference to different cases, but that more radical editor refused to name his correspondents. The editor of the *Astrea* wrote, “the names of our correspondents is and will be an eternal secret, and for them we will suffer any punishment.”<sup>93</sup> Apparently, Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga of the *Aurora* was not as principled, and Látego was unmasked. His real name was José Maria Cambucí. Having gotten what he was after, Saturnino dropped the case.<sup>94</sup> Saturnino took the affair out of the hands of the court.<sup>95</sup> Saturnino felt that

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<sup>93</sup>*Astrea*, 18 November 1826, #63.

<sup>94</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 12 May 1828, #42. To prevent confusion, Cambucí will retain his pseudonym in our discussion.

<sup>95</sup>Pitt-Rivers argues that the court was not a viable avenue for redress in cases of honor, presumably because honor is personal and the court, by definition is impersonal. However, Brazilians in the First Empire used the court in conjunction with the newspapers to punish their accusers and publish their public news of their accusers’ retractions or legal defeats. Julian Pitt-Rivers, “Honour and Social Status,” *Honour and Shame: The Values of a Mediterranean Society*, J. C. Peristiany, ed., (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), 30. Sandra Gayol concurs when she writes “the defense of honor was too intimate an affair to be entrusted to a third party.” Sandra Gayol, “‘Honor Moderno’: The Significance of Honor in Fin-de-Siècle Argentina,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 84 no. 3, (2004): 479.

exposing Látego to the public would throw the struggle to retain honor back to his attacker. “It is enough,” he wrote, “for the attacker to be known as a vile and ungrateful slanderer and to be judged by men of probity.”<sup>96</sup> Saturnino exposed Látego to the public eye and let the court of public opinion judge him.

Finding out Látego’s real name was not wholly satisfying for Saturnino, however. He had thought that Látego was his friend. Discovering that his supposed friend had publicly attacked him provided a doubly damaging affront to Saturnino’s honor. Saturnino traveled in circles with other liberals, like Látego, who now looked at him, he felt, as not being truly liberal. Saturnino had to defend himself; it was unlikely that the normal rituals of honor could satisfy this affront.

Up to this point, Saturnino had exhausted most of the options available to him. He replied to his attacker in the press, and he denounced his attacker to the promoter. He was not done, however. Látego tells us that he had sent a letter of satisfaction to the *Aurora Fluminense* explaining his characterization of Saturnino. A letter of satisfaction, while far from an apology, usually healed any major damage to the accused’s honor and prevented further escalation. Before the letter was printed, however, Látego reported:

At 8 o’clock at night, when I was returning to my home, I felt a blow from behind and the voice of the lawyer [Saturnino] calling me a weak coward; as I had in my hand a small riding crop, I advanced toward this Gentleman and gathered between my arms his shadow, for he had already reached the corner of the Rua dos Ourives at a sprint. This is one more proof of the liberalism of Sr. Saturnino. To come treasonously in the shadows of the night to attack a man sixteen years his elder! Shame of all shame!!<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 12 May 1828, #42.

<sup>97</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 14 May 1828, #43.



This was quite a turn of events for the case of Saturnino and Látego. An affair that normally would have ended with a response by Látego in the press, now had escalated beyond the repair of a letter of satisfaction. Látego immediately notified the *Aurora* to not print his letter of satisfaction, and he penned the above description of events in its stead. Saturnino's response, which was printed before Látego's description of events (curiously, since it refers to the wording of Látego's description), was to write in to the *Aurora* claiming that the original affront was so damaging that it was beyond the pale of a usual response.

To say someone was only a liberal after a few good bottles [of wine], does not allow satisfaction, nor a written response, but only a stick. It was this that I gave to [Látego], not treasonously, as he says, but I did take him by the arm, making him turn to me and asked him his motive for injuring me. I only regret that the infame character of this man has reduced me to this point. Such grave insults given with a gloved hand without any cause would blind even the most level-headed man. But the public, who has censured the vile proceedings of [Látego, and] who has suffered to see me slandered and injured without cause, will give me the Justice that I desire.<sup>98</sup>

Saturnino moved beyond the normal bounds of the defense of his honor. In doing so, he opened his honor to further attack from Látego. Interestingly, Saturnino returned to the forum of the press to defend his actions. Even if he did not feel a printed satisfaction would heal the initial rift, he did feel that a printed explanation of his actions was necessary.

Saturnino may have felt that he had exhausted the normal options for redress without gaining satisfaction. Therefore, he committed the dishonorable act of attacking his critic on the street.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 12 May 1828, #42.

<sup>99</sup>Violence remained the isolated exceptions to the much more general rule. While dueling and other physical displays of honor certainly were not unheard of in this time, they were not discussed in the newspapers. The only account I have uncovered in the press appears in the English language *Rio Herald*. The *Herald* recounted a duel that took place just outside the city. The two combatants were once friends, and, after three shots, a bullet struck one of the men. It was turned from doing the most damage by a pocket Bible the man happened to be carrying. The seconds interceded and the affair was ended. *Rio Herald*, 19 April 1828, #7. Interestingly, the *Herald* reported this case a mere five days after Cambucí's account of his assault appeared in the *Aurora*.

There were several cases where authors of offending newspaper articles were attacked, but these attacks were not considered acceptable acts in the play of honor of the day.<sup>100</sup> For one thing, the attackers of newspaper editors or article writers were, to a man, anonymous. In the most classic case, the attackers were not even personally offended by the author. Libero Badaró, the fiery editor from São Paulo, was killed by German mercenaries (allegedly) hired by a local district judge. Even Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga, a moderate editor, was shot by an unknown assailant while he sat in his bookshop a few years after the period under study here.<sup>101</sup>

One case in particular shows the reactions of an author when attacked beyond the scope of an affair of honor. In mid 1829, the *Aurora Fluminense* reported that an unnamed deputy “well known for the frankness of his Liberal opinions was attacked.” Evaristo of the *Aurora* interpreted the attack as an intimidation tactic against the “defenders of liberty.”<sup>102</sup> A month later the deputy, Augusto Xavier de Carvalho, wrote to the *Aurora* to report a second

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There is no way to tell if the combatants were the one-time friends Saturnino and Cambucí, however. The fact that the only English-language newspaper reported the only account of a duel could indicate that more duels occurred but the code of honor prevented the local language newspapers from reporting them. Also, the fact that the one account of a duel was presented as an anecdote lends credence to the idea that regular duels were not reported in the press. Joanne Freeman has uncovered numerous duels for a slightly earlier period in U.S. history, including the classic Hamilton/Burr duel, which started with a report assumed to be written by Hamilton in the newspaper the *Albany Register*. Joanne B. Freeman, “Dueling as Politics: Reinterpreting the Burr-Hamilton Duel,” *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 53 no. 2, (April 1996). Likewise, for a similar point in French history William Reddy reports that “the journalistic duel was typically the result of a word or phrase published in an article or review that was judged insulting or untrue by a person involved in the story.” Reddy, “Condottieri of the Pen,” 1556. Why duels were not so frequent in Brazil, or at least not discussed in the press, remains an open question. David Parker argues that duels did not become common until well after the period studied here. As he writes, “In Uruguay and several other countries, dueling did not reach its apogee until after World War I,” (para. 7). David S Parker, “Law, Honor, and Impunity: Spanish America: The Debate Over Dueling,” *Law and History Review*. Summer 2001, <<http://historycooperative.press.uiuc.edu/journals/1hr/19.2/parker/html>> (accessed 10 September 2005).

<sup>100</sup>In our period, three editors (of *L’Echo*, *Malagueta*, and *Voz Fluminense*) were attacked on the streets in Rio de Janeiro. Editors in other provinces also were attacked, most notably the editors of the *Diário do Pernambuco* and the *Abelho Pernambucano*, and Libero Badaró of the *São Paulo Constitucional*.

<sup>101</sup>Octávio Tarquínio de Sousa, *Evaristo da Veiga*, (São Paulo: Editora Itatiaia, 1988).

<sup>102</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 22 June 1829 #205.

act in this dangerous play. He was awoken one night by a knock on his door. No one was at the door, but a note had been surreptitiously slipped under his door. In poor writing style, the note read:

Without more delay take the counsel I am giving you now – if you do not want to take it [this counsel] your body will pay – seeing that already you are at a decrepit age and not in the flower [of youth]. It is better [for you] to be careful in this session [of the Legislature] and go [home] to Pernambuco.

While the writing may not be clear, the message certainly was. Carvalho was being warned by his anonymous attacker to tone down his liberal oratory in the legislature. Carvalho paid no attention to the note or the attack for it was his “obligation” to fulfill the role appointed to him by the nation. Importantly, he wrote that he gave “no importance to anonymous letters.”<sup>103</sup> Carvalho was not the only outspoken liberal to receive an anonymous threat. The editor of the *Voz Fluminense* woke one morning to find a letter slipped under his door. The unknown author wrote: “I’m warning you that if you keep up this ... of false insults you’ll get marked [by a blow or a cut] on the right cheek at least and get a thrashing [with a whip or rod], too, whether in your house or in the street because I guarantee you won’t escape.”<sup>104</sup> Anonymous threatening letters slipped furtively under doors were not considered acceptable means of public attack. Honor is a language that needs to be understood by both parties. When one person does not speak the language of honor, the other person is left with few honorable options. Police involvement or any change in their professional lives would have

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<sup>103</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 13 July 1829 #212.

<sup>104</sup> *Voz Fluminense*, 27 March 1830, #67.

brought dishonor to Carvalho and the editor of the *Voz Fluminense*. The honorable thing for them to do was to do nothing.<sup>105</sup>

We do not know how the affair of Látego and Saturnino ended. Both men remained in the public eye and their names surfaced in the newspapers from time to time. Saturnino, for his part, found it hard to move beyond the affair. When he responded to a rumor that circulated in Rio after his affair with Látego, Saturnino prefaced his response with an acknowledgement of the power of newspapers and the importance of the reading public. “I give this satisfaction,” he wrote, “not to who has malignantly spread the opposite of what happened, but rather to the public, who I respect very much.”<sup>106</sup> By this time the public had become a force to reckon with, and both editors and readers used the press to reach this newly active public.

## ***Conclusion***

The liberty of the press enabled the liberal editors to act within their conception of the duties and obligations of a member of the literate elite in a constitutional monarchy. They saw no conflict between supporting Pedro as emperor and attacking the official representatives of his government. By carefully observing public officials and arguing against any supposed transgression of the people’s rights guaranteed by the constitution, the liberal editors believed they were helping to shore up the government, not dismantle it. A key right that they believed was worth defending was the involvement of the people in the

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<sup>105</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 13 July 1829, #212.

<sup>106</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 21 May 1830, #339.

governing of the state. The press provided a vehicle by which the editors could educate the public and prepare it for active participation, and it also provided an arena by which that public could become involved. Liberal editors believed that “no government is able to negate that without this precious frankness of publishing by the press their thoughts, there is in modern states neither social betterment, political guarantees, nor even true civilization.”<sup>107</sup> While to our ears today this may sound overly panegyric, for liberal editors and their readers in the late First Empire it was a truth that was worth defending. What was printed in the press mattered; messages had impact and power. From the social realm of accusations against one’s honor to the political realm of watching for government corruption, the newspapers played a highly visible role in everyday affairs. Both the reading public and government officials kept a close eye on newspaper discussions and joined in on a regular basis. They all obviously felt the press was not only a worthwhile vehicle for public expression; it was also a vital and necessary one.

In the case of abuse against the liberty of the press that opened this chapter the editor of the *República* was accused of violating the law by arguing for federation. His acquittal caused the conservative *Verdadeiro Patriota* to write: “capriciousness has triumphed, and the honor of the oppressed citizen has not been revenged.”<sup>108</sup> The liberal press viewed the outcome differently. Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* claimed it was the appointed Juiz de Direito who was corrupt. The judge dismissed the first jury because the members were unable to return a guilty verdict. Then, he refused to seat Luiz Augusto May, the editor of

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<sup>107</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 6 March 1829, #162.

<sup>108</sup> *Verdadeiro Patriota*, 25 January 1831, #27.

the liberal newspaper the *Malagueta*, even though May was chosen as a juror for the day.<sup>109</sup>

When the editor of the *República* finally entered the courtroom, he “encountered strong support” among the jury “and his articles concerning federation were applauded with repeated Vivas.”<sup>110</sup> The conservative *Verdadeiro Patriota* had reason to bewail the increasing power held by jurors in the cases concerning the liberty of the press. For several years, the liberal editors had courted the reading and listening public to create the very thing most feared by the conservative editors: an active and informed public.

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<sup>109</sup>*República*, 19 January 1831, #31.

<sup>110</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileiro*, 8 March 1831, #124.

### CHAPTER III:

#### PEDRO, THE PRESS, AND POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

Early in 1828, a correspondent of the radical newspaper the *Astrea* proposed a concept that would be debated, cheered, and condemned over the next three years, shaking the political foundations of the young nation of Brazil. In what would later be dubbed the “Letter of Sovereignty,” a correspondent naming himself “An Enemy of Echoes” admonished the editor of the *Astrea* for calling the emperor “sovereign.” To do so, the author argued, offended Pedro, since it implied that Pedro had usurped the title from its rightful owner: the nation.<sup>1</sup>

The “Letter of Sovereignty” sparked dozens of responses in the press from all points on the political spectrum. It was quickly denounced by the promoter and the first jury agreed that it should stand trial for abusing the liberty of the press. The letter writer was not to be silenced, however. His reply to the jury’s decision was an accusation of jury tampering. He had heard a rumor that two men “visited the houses of some of the Jurors to convince them they should condemn the correspondence.”<sup>2</sup> Even several weeks after the appearance of the original letter, its author continued to write to the *Astrea* defending his points. Public outcry

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<sup>1</sup>*Astrea*, 19 February 1828, #248.

<sup>2</sup>*Astrea*, 6 March 1828, #255.

emboldened him and by the middle of March he wrote that “the nation which is not sovereign is enslaved.”<sup>3</sup>

Conservative newspaper editors were quick to respond to what they believed were revolutionary ideas. The “Letter of Sovereignty” even spurred the creation of a new newspaper: the *Honra do Brasil*. The editor of the *Honra* took particular offense with the correspondent’s application of the title sovereign:

The Emperor cannot be despoiled of the Honor of the name of sovereign, which is used by all the kings and emperors who have the treatment of Majesty. The Constitution authorizes him to rule above the General Assembly and all the political powers and made his Person Sacred, Inviolable, and without responsibility to anyone. To negate this is an abuse of the liberty of the press, an attack on his Imperial Majesty, and dangerous to the Public Order and to the Tranquility of the Empire.<sup>4</sup>

The conservatives believed the claim made in the radical *Astrea* had the potential to tear down the foundation on which the Brazilian nation rested. Indeed, “the monarchy of France was destroyed by the Anarchic Principle espoused by the *Astrea* = Sovereignty resides in the nation, and as a result the People have the absolute power to change the chief of the government and the forms of the government.”<sup>5</sup>

It is not surprising that this conservative editor believed the radical liberal newspaper dishonored Pedro by removing the title of sovereign. What is surprising is the vehemence of the response and the dire consequences envisioned by the editor. Why would removing the title “sovereign” from the emperor constitute an attack against his “sacred,” and “inviolable” person? If it was an attack on the person of Pedro, why would such an attack endanger the

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<sup>3</sup>*Astrea*, 18 March 1828, #260.

<sup>4</sup>*Honra do Brasil*, 28 April 1828, #6.

<sup>5</sup>It was common to invoke the name of the newspaper when attacking a particular letter. *Honra do Brasil*, 5 May 1828, number illegible.



nation? This chapter will explore the positions of the various newspaper editors on where the legitimacy of the Empire rested and, essentially, who was in charge: the Emperor or the People. Two key elements of First Empire print culture emerge from this exploration. First, the position of the liberal editors towards Pedro matured over the last three years of the First Empire. While never attacking his person or even arguing that Pedro should not be emperor, liberal editors reinterpreted the role of the people in the state and re-envisioned the principles on which the nation rested. Second, this discussion shows how the press had become not only a viable arena for a discussion of political affairs, it became *the* central forum for debating key issues of state. Newspapers allowed editors and their readers to participate in Rio's political culture and their arguments and ideas had real consequences for Pedro's government.

This chapter details how the conservative and liberal newspaper editors of the First Empire conceived of Emperor Pedro I as a leader. They differed on fundamental points and maintained a running dialogue over the last three years of Pedro's rule. At issue in the argument over who was sovereign, the emperor or the nation, was the basic principle of legitimacy.<sup>6</sup> Conservative editors claimed Pedro was legitimate because he was the rightful

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<sup>6</sup>The idea that the conservatives and liberals differed on who was sovereign—the Emperor or the people—has been discussed by several historians. In the most comprehensive work on the period, Roderick Barman found this question raised frequently in the formative years of Brazilian independence (1822-1823). Before any clear decisions had been made on the direction of the young nation, “believers in the contract theory of political organization (basically liberals) clashed with those who regarded authority as inherited and providential (traditionalists and conservatives).” Barman, *Brazil: The Forging of a Nation*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 97. When detailing the events that characterized the end of the decade, Barman returns to this idea: “A conception of the nation as polity based on traditional forms of inherited authority and directed by a ruler of heroic stature was increasingly challenged by a conception that equated the nation with the people and derived all authority from the popular will.” Barman, *Brazil*, 131. Barman bases most of his statements on Brazilian parliament debates and correspondence of foreign ministers. While I agree with the broad strokes of the argument presented by Barman and others, what is lacking is a deeper understanding of the nuances of the debate, and how this debate was reflected in the press. From 1828 to 1831, the newspaper editors presented extremely detailed perspectives on where the legitimacy of the nation rested and who deserved the title of sovereign. Positions and arguments were not clear cut; nor can they be dismissed as either reactionary or blindly adopted from European models.

heir of a legitimate, albeit absolute, monarch. Moderate liberal editors also believed that Pedro deserved his position because of his royal blood, but they expected more from him than what was found in a standard monarch/subject relationship. Bloodline positioned Pedro initially to lead the nation to independence. A significant role for the people was necessary for his continued ability to rule, however. They did not accept that he could rule the nation as an absolute monarch, but the fear of revolution and anarchy ensured their criticism of the government was never directed toward the emperor himself. By the end of the 1820s, radical liberals were writing that Pedro's legitimacy stemmed not from his birth but from the will and choice of the people. They made him legitimate and they could take that legitimacy away. But, while on the surface they espoused a position similar to the revolutionaries of 1789 France, the radicals still followed traditional patronage models of personal appeals to the Emperor and respect for his royal person. By contesting the legitimacy of the monarch, the liberals conceptually weakened the ability of Pedro to rule in the manner to which he was accustomed. He would be forced to alter his style of governing or face the consequences; legitimacy was conditional.

The two sides were separated along continental lines. The conservative editors followed what they believed to be the traditional (and accepted), European system for determining legitimacy.<sup>7</sup> The most important criteria for legitimacy in their eyes was the

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<sup>7</sup>The literature, especially in French studies, on the "divine right" of Kings is rich. A sampling of the more influential works are: Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Sara E. Melzer and Kathryn Norberg, eds., *From the Royal to the Republican Body: Incorporating the Political in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century France*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); and numerous chapters of the three-volume work, *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture*, Keith Baker, François Furet, and Colin Lucas, eds., (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1987). Tracing specific influences on editors' positions is rarely possible, however. Often, heavily modified passages from the same philosophers were used by pundits on both sides of the debate to support their positions. For a discussion of the adaptation of the Portuguese monarchy in the New World and the principles that underpinned it, see Kirsten Schultz, "Royal Authority, Empire and the Critique of Colonialism: Political Discourse in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1821," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 37 no. 2, (2000): 8.

bloodline of the ruler; legitimacy was absolute. Liberal editors, on the other hand, believed that the separation of Brazil from Portugal signaled a break with all things European. Hence, New World legitimacy would take a different form: popular sovereignty. The rejection of Old World political models was part of the lingering, and in some senses growing, resentment against all things Portuguese.<sup>8</sup> The more that Pedro allied himself to the cause of his daughter, the Queen of Portugal, the more the liberal editors criticized the government for being out of touch with the needs of Brazilians.

The debate over the place of the monarch in the constitutional system of Brazil underscores the fragility of the First Empire and the role forces outside the closed confines of the state had in determining the course of the empire. Until recently, it was common to conceptualize the nineteenth century of Brazil as one long struggle by members of the landed elite to maintain unity and preserve their economic interests. In this conceptualization the political debates and urban turmoil of the First Empire, Regency, and early Second Empire were dismissed by referring to them as empty rhetorical tools of the ruling elite or merely convenient avenues for the opposition to attack those in power.<sup>9</sup> All too often the virulent

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<sup>8</sup>This argument adds to the movement in the current historiography that examines the omnipresent ‘lusophobia’ and increasing violence between native Brazilians and Portuguese in the First Empire and Regency. Gladys Sabina Ribeiro has argued for a reinterpretation of the categories of ‘Brazilian’ and ‘Portuguese,’ while Jeffrey Mosher and John Charles Chasteen find elements of nativism or ‘proto-nationalism’ in the coalescing nature of anti-Portuguese violence. Gladys Sabina Ribeiro, *A Liberdade em Construção: Identidade Nacional e Conflitos Antilusitanos no Primeiro Reinado*, (Rio: Relume Dumará, 2002); Mosher, “Political Mobilization, Party Ideology, and Lusophobia in Nineteenth-Century Brazil: Pernambuco, 1822-1850,” *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 80, no. 4, (2000); and John Charles Chasteen, “Cautionary Tale: A Radical Priest, Nativist Agitation and the Origins of the Brazilian Civil Wars,” *Rumours of Wars: Civil Conflict in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, Rebecca Earle, ed., (London: University of London, 2000).

<sup>9</sup>For master narratives that emphasize the stability of the Empire and tend to overlook intricacies of the political debates, see Alfredo Valladão, *Da Aclamação à Maioridade (1822-1840), e Outros Trabalhos Históricos*, (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria Freitas Bastos, 1973), João Camilo de Oliveira Torres, *Os Construtores do Império: Ideais e Lutas do Partido Conservador Brasileiro*, (São Paulo: Cia. Ed. Nacional, 1968), Oliveira Lima *O Império Brasileiro (1821-1889)*, (Belo Horizonte: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1989), Emilia Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories*, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1985).

debates over the direction of the young nation have been overwhelmed, in retrospect, by the perceived stability of the empire. The debates that raged in First Empire newspapers over the legitimacy of the emperor and the spillover of those ideas into actions in the street and the legislature indicate that the stability of the empire was not a foregone conclusion. Newspaper arguments over the foundation and perpetuation of the state mattered, and editors constantly formed and reformed Rio de Janeiro's changing political culture.<sup>10</sup>

### ***Personal Politics***

The debate over political models in the newspapers revolved around the person of the emperor. In the eyes of conservative editors, Pedro's person was all important to the Brazilian government because his person represented the nation.<sup>11</sup> The public sphere of First

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<sup>10</sup>Lately, several historians have investigated this outward-appearing stability and have begun to question the inevitability of the outcome. For a sampling of historians who have questioned the inevitability of the political structures that emerged from the turmoil of the First Empire and Regency, see Jeffrey Mosher, "Challenging Authority: Political Violence and the Regency in Pernambuco, Brazil, 1831-1835," *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 37, (Winter, 2000), and "Political Mobilization," and Jeffrey D. Needell, "Party Formation and State-Making: the Conservative Party and the Reconstruction of the Brazilian State, 1831-1840," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 81 no. 2, (2001).

<sup>11</sup>The personal connection of Pedro to the political structure of the First Empire has long been discussed by biographers and historians. The standard interpretation of the violence that characterized the end of Brazil's First Empire, eventually leading to Pedro's abdication, is that the Emperor was more comfortable on the back of a horse than on a constitutional throne - in front of an army than in front of an elected assembly. Biographies of the Emperor laud his personal charisma and bravery, finding in them reasons for his early popularity among the masses of Brazilians. His later unpopularity and eventual inability to rule is explained by his impatience in dealing with parliamentary politics and his longing for the danger and action of a military adventure to reclaim the throne of Portugal for his daughter against his brother the usurper, Miguel. Barman sums up the historiography well by writing "the history of Dom Pedro I's reign has long been presented in personal terms: as a direct combat between the emperor and his myriad opponents." Barman, *Brazil*, 131. For first-hand accounts of Pedro as Emperor see Carl Schlichthorst, *O Rio de Janeiro come é, 1824-1826*, (Rio de Janeiro: Getulio Costa, 1943), 52; and *Dez anos no Brasil*, Bertholdo Ritter Klinger, trans., (São Paulo: Livraria Martins, 1941); Carl Seidler, *Historia das Guerras e Revoluções do Brasil de 1825 á 1835*, Alfredo de Carvalho, trans., (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1939), 34; João Loureiro, "Cartas de João Loureiro," *Revista Instituto Histórico Geographico Brasileiro*, vol. 76, 359; Maria Graham, "Escorço Biográfico do Dom Pedro I, com uma

Empire Brazil revolved, in their eyes, solely around the presence of the monarch.<sup>12</sup>

Therefore, his person, both physically and conceptually, had to be honored and protected at all costs. Conservative editors, either expressly supported by the government or not, invested heavily in the importance of the person of the Emperor, giving it a mythic, unassailable quality. To them, Pedro was the rock on which the nation of Brazil stood. Liberal editors, on the other hand, held a more complex view of the person of Pedro. They followed the actions of Pedro with great interest, but in their conceptualization of the emperor the person of Pedro did not transcend its earthly form. In fact, liberals constantly re-framed Pedro's role in the nation and complained that the conservatives "mix a sacred cause of the Heavens with a purely human question."<sup>13</sup> However, liberals maintained respect for Pedro throughout the last few years of the First Empire because Brazilians did not have a long history of shared experience to draw on for political stability and geographical unity. Conservative and

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Notícia do Brasil e do Rio de Janeiro em seu tempo," *Revista Instituto Histórico Geographico Brasileiro*, vol. 60, 1938. For biographies, see Alberto Rangel, *Dom Pedro Primeiro e a Marquesa de Santos: a Vista de Cartas Intimas e de Outros Documentos Públicos e Particulares*, (Tours: Typographia de Arrault, 1928); Assis Cintra, *As Amantes do Imperador*, (Rio: Civilização Brasileira, 1933); Sergio Correa da Costa, *Every Inch a King: A Biography of Dom Pedro I, First Emperor of Brazil*, Samuel Putnam, trans., (London: Robert Hale, 1972); Tobias Monteiro, *História do Império: O Primeiro Reinado*, (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1982); Neill Macaulay, *Dom Pedro: The Struggle for Liberty in Brazil and Portugal, 1798-1834*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986).

<sup>12</sup>Pedro's insistence on personal presence and a patronage system of governing supports Habermas's discussion of a representative public sphere. Habermas defines a bourgeois public sphere as "the sphere of private people come together as a public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor." Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry Into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Thomas Burger, trans. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), 27. Before the development of this bourgeois public sphere, rulers ruled as representatives of their government. That is, the ruler embodied the government, rather than representing the people. In Habermas's words, "the publicness or representation was not constituted as a social realm, that is, as a public sphere; rather, it was something like a status attribute," 7. Jeffrey Ravel agrees and elaborates: "In this view, a 'public sphere' could only be constructed around the presence, real or imagined, of the ruler." Jeffrey Ravel, "Seating the Public: Spheres and Loathing in the Paris Theatres, 1777-1788," *French Historical Studies*, vol. 18 no. 1, (Spring 1993): 175.

<sup>13</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 22 February 1828, #19.

liberals alike rallied around the emperor as the glue that kept the far-flung empire together, yet their conceptions of the importance of Pedro's person differed radically.

The importance of the person of the monarch can be traced back to the arrival of the Prince Regent Dom João in 1808. Kirsten Schultz has detailed how the political culture of Rio changed almost overnight as a result of the presence of the monarch. His presence alone “ended Brazil’s former subordinate position within the Portuguese empire.”<sup>14</sup> Suddenly residents of Rio could appeal directly to the person of the monarch to right wrongs or plead for favor.<sup>15</sup> That new relationship brought with it changes in the relationship between the monarch and his subjects. Constitutionalist pamphlets of the early 1820s challenged the traditional, or Old World, rules of monarchs in relation to subjects. This was not considered an attack on the person of the monarch or on the basis of his legitimacy; rather, the monarch’s subjects were invested in the system and defended their newfound proximity to the seat of power.<sup>16</sup>

One example of how the role of Pedro's person was debated in the press is the discussion of civic rituals.<sup>17</sup> For conservative editors, 12 October was a day to celebrate the

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<sup>14</sup>Schultz, “Royal Authority,” 9.

<sup>15</sup>In *Tropical Versailles* Schultz details how the person of the Monarch changed almost all aspects of Rio's political culture – from public rituals to more informal encounters. Kirsten Schultz, *Tropical Versailles: Empire, Monarchy, and the Portuguese Royal Court in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1821*, (NY: Routledge, 2001), especially chapter V, “‘Tropical Versailles’: The Politics of Monarchy in the New World.”

<sup>16</sup>Schultz, “Royal Authority,” 16.

<sup>17</sup>The editors had good reason to focus on civic rituals as expressions of Pedro's body politic. The Emperor understood the power of his person and used it to great effect. As we will see in the next chapter, he used ritual to reinforce his legitimacy through his personal presence and his connection with certain legitimizing attributes of the young nation. In this way, Brazilian political rituals were similar to nineteenth-century American parades where “constituent groups in the polity actually presented themselves, rather than abstract symbols, for public view.” Mary Ryan, “The American Parade: Representations of the Nineteenth-Century Social Order,” *The New Cultural History*, Lynn Hunt, ed., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 137. In many religious rituals, Pedro was seen at the head of the procession, or even carrying the image through the streets. Reverend Robert Walsh reported that during one Ash Wednesday religious procession “a number of persons entered the church, and one of them humbly kneeling down close beside me, placed his shoulder under the pole of the

birth of the emperor, and by extension, the birth of the nation. He embodied the nation; consequently, editors focused their commentary on the fact that their leader and emperor was born on this date. Just as Pedro placed himself in physical positions to reinforce his legitimacy, or his ‘Brazilian-ness’ in the eyes of the people, the conservative newspapers placed him at the center of their discussion of ritual events. The conservative editors skewed all the most important civic holidays in an effort to place Pedro as the progenitor of the Brazilian nation. This is why the conservatives felt that 12 October, Pedro’s birthday, was “without contradiction the most brilliant and majestic of Brazil.”<sup>18</sup>

Liberal editors, on the other hand, downplayed the fact that Pedro was born on this day in favor of the role of the people in acclaiming him emperor. In his discussion of 12 October 1829, Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga of the *Aurora Fluminense* focused on how the people chose that day to acclaim Pedro as their emperor as a “proof of their solemn gratitude.” Opposite to what the conservative editors and Pedro himself would claim, the liberal editors reiterated their belief that Pedro was only the emperor of Brazil because the people chose him to be. This aspect of choice runs throughout the *Aurora’s* commentary. It was stressed because it set the Brazilian monarchy apart from that of the Old World. The Braganza dynasty in Brazil was not a continuation of the one in Portugal; in fact, it resembled no other monarchy. Pedro had *earned* his right to be emperor by acting in accordance with the desires of the people. Essentially, while the people might owe their independence to him and his acts, he owed his throne to them. Consequently, it was implied

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platform, and lifted it up. It was of considerable weight, and required no small muscular exertion, and while I looked in the face of the strong man who supported it, I perceived he was the Emperor.” Walsh, *Notices of Brazil*, vol. II, 211; see also Eduardo Theodoro Bosche, “Quadros Alternados” *Revista do Instituto Histórico Geographico Brasileiro*, vol. 83, (1918), 175. By acting in the rituals most attended by the people, Pedro placed his person on display for all to see, thereby reinforcing his connection to the people.

<sup>18</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 12 October 1830, #83.

that if the contract were broken, i.e., Pedro no longer acted in accordance with the desires of the people, then the people could take away his throne. This choice by the people ensured that Pedro was the “truly legitimate *Chefe* of a free People.”

Yet liberal editors retained their respect for the person of Pedro. When Pedro’s carriage overturned in December 1829, throwing the royal family and causing Pedro to lose consciousness, the liberal and conservative newspapers alike were full of reports about the emperor’s condition. The radical liberal *Nova Luz Brasileira* dedicated an entire issue to the accident and closed his discussion with “pray to the Heavens for the life of our adored Perpetual Defender.”<sup>19</sup> The *Aurora Fluminense* followed Pedro’s healing process over multiple editions. The liberal editor included nine separate medical bulletins that provided such mundane information as “the Emperor has taken some food with a good appetite.” Also included were graphic descriptions of the emperor’s many contusions and the large tumor on his right side caused by the accident.<sup>20</sup> Similar to their reporting on the emperor’s accident and recovery, liberal editors included reports of the benevolence of Pedro. When the towns of Macacú and Magé were suffering from a serious epidemic (probably cholera) the emperor was the first to provide from his personal coffers to help the sick. The *Aurora Fluminense* commented that “the act of Philanthropy that our August Emperor showed ingratiated himself still more into the hearts of Brazilians.”<sup>21</sup> Finally, liberal editors often penned letters in their newspapers addressed to the emperor. The salutations of these letters indicate the respect the editors had for the emperor. For example, the radical liberal editor of the *Malagueta* signed one of his letters with: “Prostrated at the feet of You Imperial Majesty

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<sup>19</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 11 December 1829, #2.

<sup>20</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 16 December 1830, #279.

<sup>21</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 10 March 1830, #311.



kissing your August Hand – your most faithful and reverent subject, the editor of the *Malagueta*.”<sup>22</sup> The liberal editors saw no incongruence with respecting the person of the emperor while at the same time denouncing the conservatives’ effort to place Pedro above normal man. For the liberals, Pedro was essential to the stability of the nation, but he was “nothing more than the first employee of the nation.”<sup>23</sup>

Since the traditional view of Brazil’s political culture held that Pedro was the key to the political system of the First Empire, the existence of the nation as a free and independent entity relied on Pedro’s claim as the legitimate ruler. However, he faced significant obstacles to legitimacy; he needed to appease two very different political traditions. To be recognized as sovereign by the wealthy Portuguese of the court city, Pedro needed to appease the ruling European monarchs (a necessary precondition for treaty-making and trade status). To be accepted by the native Brazilians, especially the landed elite who dominated the chamber of deputies, Pedro needed to appear to be one of the nation and to have the nation’s best interests in mind. This constant struggle is seen in all facets of First Empire Brazil’s political system. From the reinterpretation of civic rituals to the battle over abstract ideas in the press, journalists representing all points on the political spectrum constantly offered differing interpretations of the legitimacy of the monarch and where the sovereignty of the nation rested.

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<sup>22</sup> *Malagueta*, 11 November 1828, #47.

<sup>23</sup> *Nova Luz Brasileira*, 15 April 1831, #131.

## *Legitimacy*

Both the conservative and liberal newspapers were obsessed with the idea of legitimacy. An exasperated *Brasileiro Imparcial* wrote, “The question of legitimacy has been so discussed that it appears odious to spend more time on this object.” However, “it is so transcendent for our young Brazil, surrounded by democratic and oligarchic governments, and our people still do not have the instruction necessary to know well their rights and their obligations that it obliges us to speak a few words on this respect.”<sup>24</sup> Even though the topic had been discussed incessantly for Pedro’s entire reign, accepting the monarch as legitimate, and not someone who simply inherited an office or claimed the right to rule as a result of an outdated political system, meant the difference between public support and anarchy. Hence, it was the most important of all political debates in the newspapers.

## *Conservatives*

The conservative newspaper editors argued that Pedro was legitimate because he was of royal bloodline and because of the actions of his father, the legitimate king of Portugal. Roughly put, Pedro was born into the House of Braganza and he was appointed Prince Regent by the legitimate monarch, his father. These two things supplied the traditional basis for legitimacy in the eyes of the conservative pundits as well as European monarchs (a pre-

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<sup>24</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 1 June 1830, #44.

condition to recognition of the independence of Brazil).<sup>25</sup> In keeping with the editors' view of traditional European conceptions of legitimacy, Pedro was above normal man; he had God-given powers that separated him from the rest of the nation. Therefore, his legitimacy was unassailable.

The first component of the conservative platform was the easiest to prove. The *Honra do Brasil* directly equated legitimacy with birthright: "Legitimacy, or the Right of Primogeniture of the Presumptive Heir to the House of Braganza, was not only an influential cause, but also a preponderant cause" of the independence of Brazil.<sup>26</sup> In the next edition the editor succinctly stated that Pedro's "right to be the sovereign of Brazil is evident and incontestable by the principle of legitimacy as heir of the August house of Braganza."<sup>27</sup> Of course Pedro declared Brazil independent of Portugal, breaking the dynastic rule. The conservatives argued around this issue by emphasizing that Pedro's legitimacy began with his birth, was reinforced by the actions of his father, and made permanent by his own deeds. When his father, João VI, left Brazil in 1821 at the behest of the Portuguese legislature, Pedro remained in Brazil as prince regent. He was the legitimate interim leader of Brazil because he acted in the name of his father, the legitimate king of the Portuguese empire. Therefore, on 7 September, when Pedro declared Brazil independent, the state "already had a

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<sup>25</sup>Numerous European theorists and philosophers were used by editors on both sides of the debate to defend their positions. To support the concept that the Emperor gained his legitimacy from royal birth, the *Honra do Brasil* quoted from over twenty European authors. Well-known writers on the list included Hume, Bacon, and Adam Smith, while lesser-known theorists such as Beauhour and Daurau de Brie also made the list. Even when the names of the theorists were given, the original arguments were distorted to fit a preconceived notion. For example, Jean-Jacques Rousseau was quoted heavily by the conservative *Honra* to support the position that the people are not sovereign.

<sup>26</sup>*Honra do Brasil*, 9 June 1828, #15.

<sup>27</sup>*Honra do Brasil*, 12 June 1828, #16.

chief, who was the same Prince Regent.”<sup>28</sup> Pedro’s legitimacy as prince regent, appointed by the king, meant that he was able to lead the nation seamlessly into independence. The *Brasileiro Imparcial* reported that in 1822 “this enlightened Prince knew that the epoch had arrived for the emancipation of Brazil and that he should harmonize with the lights of the century and with the necessities and advantages of the people; he put himself at the front of independence, he called all the inhabitants of Brazil to a center.”<sup>29</sup> “Without him nothing would have happened.”<sup>30</sup>

Conservative editors believed that Pedro’s royal blood gave his person innate powers. It was the “rights inherent to his person” that commanded respect and allowed Pedro to lead the country.<sup>31</sup> It was common for conservative editors to raise Pedro’s actions during the independence period as proof of his ability to rule and his role in the founding of the state. One of the scenes most commonly mentioned was Pedro’s role in the troop revolt in the Rocio in 1821. The Porto revolution of August 1820 overthrew the traditional power base of Braganza rule in Portugal. Partly due to the absence of the king from Lisbon, the Portuguese legislature promised a more liberal constitution. On 26 February 1821, a mass of soldiers loyal to the Porto radicals went to the Rocio, the common meeting ground of Rio de Janeiro, to demand the government adopt the new constitution. The troops were soon joined by a large number of people. They would not disperse until Pedro, the heir to the throne, arrived and promised them their wishes would be granted. In the words of the eyewitness Reverend Walsh:

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<sup>28</sup>*Honra do Brasil*, 12 June 1828, #16.

<sup>29</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 2 January 1830, #1

<sup>30</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 17 April 1830, #31.

<sup>31</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 17 April 1830, #31.

[Pedro] showed an ardor and energy through the whole of this trying transaction that marked a decided and intrepid character. He rode forward, sword in hand, from place to place, took the command of the troops, and killed two horses under him by his continued exertions. Whatever may have been his private sentiments, this public conduct was the only one left him to pursue. It was impossible at the time to stem the torrent of public opinion; he acted more prudently by directing it and becoming the idol of the people.<sup>32</sup>

The people demanded to see the king. Pedro returned to the palace at Boa Vista at full gallop and convinced his father to accept the demands of the crowd and induced him to appear at the Rocio. As Macaulay notes, “the prince’s energetic presence, his acute assessment of the situation, and his insistence that the King make further concessions to avoid total disaster,” convinced Dom João to approach the people.<sup>33</sup> When Pedro returned with his father in the royal coach, a large group of revelers unhooked the horses that pulled the coach and pulled it themselves through the square, to the jubilation of the people.<sup>34</sup> Late in Pedro’s reign, conservative editors brought up this occasion as proof of the power of Pedro’s person and his right to rule based on the legitimacy inherent in his bloodline. The *Honra do Brasil* translated a passage from Eugene de Monglave’s history of Brazil to remind its readers that the nation existed only because of the actions of Pedro: he “saw the imminence of danger from the movements of the population and Troops on 24 and 25 February. He recognized that ONLY HE was able to save the Nation. He did not vacillate; he mounted his horse on

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<sup>32</sup>Walsh, *Notices of Brazil*, vol. I, 112.

<sup>33</sup>Macaulay, *Dom Pedro I*, 79.

<sup>34</sup>Vivaldo Coarcy, *Memórias da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro*, São Paulo: Editoria da Universidade de São Paulo, 1988, 88. Barman believes that Pedro played a role in inciting the troops to rise up. He quotes the British envoy, “the principal agent is no less a Person than the second in this country, I mean the Prince Royal acting under the Impulsion of others.” He does not elaborate on Pedro’s motives for supporting a move that weakened the authority of the Monarch, however. Schultz reports that some writers at the time believed the troops were ready to proclaim Pedro King if Dom João refused their demands. Macaulay echoes this sentiment and adds that “the Portuguese revolution had gone too far for the crown prince to have any hope of controlling it; but in the absence of his father Dom Pedro might be able to direct the incipient Brazilian revolution,” Macaulay, *Dom Pedro I*, 78. This seems to clash with Barman’s idea that “it was certainly D. Pedro who placated the rebellious troops,” Barman, *Brazil*, 70, Schultz, *Tropical Versailles*, 240.

the 25<sup>th</sup> and galloped to the Rocio, [and] received the unanimous acclamation of all the soldiers and People.”<sup>35</sup>

The conservatives believed that the power inherent in Pedro’s person stemmed from otherworldly sources; something separated royal blood from the blood of the common man. In keeping with their impression of European traditions of monarchy, conservatives believed the monarch was appointed by God. In this view, the people should follow the rightful leader because that leader had the power of God behind him. Royalty embodied something more than what could be found in a common man. “The legitimacy of royalty,” the *Honra do Brasil* wrote, “is an invisible magic, a mysterious Talisman, that in all the centuries, countries, and grades of civilization, spontaneously, perennially, and irresistibly impels the people to venerate, follow, and obey the natural Princes of the State.” This magic, or talisman, is provided by the “Supreme Architect of Society, Founder of Patriarchal Government.” Everything that decided the early path of Brazil was decided beforehand by God, from the decision of Dom João to make Pedro regent of Brazil to Pedro’s “resolution, sensing the signs of the times, to save the monarchy.”<sup>36</sup> The Braganzas were appointed by God to rule the Portuguese nation and its colonies. By his birthright, Pedro inherited this otherworldly mandate to be a leader of men. When he rose to the throne of Brazil he did so partly by the will of God. Therefore, any attempt to attack his person was an act against God.

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<sup>35</sup>*Honra do Brasil*, 17 June 1828, #17. Presumably, the Brazilian editor quoted from Eugène de Monglave’s, *Correspondance de don Pèdre Premier, empereur constitutionnel du Brésil, avec le feu roi de Portugal, don Jean VI, son père, Durant les troubles du Brésil*, (Paris: Tenon, 1827).

<sup>36</sup>*Honra do Brasil*, 17 June 1828, #17.

The ideology that endowed Pedro with otherworldly qualities had deeper implications for the political culture of First Empire Rio. By depicting Pedro in this light, the conservatives separated Pedro from the people. He was above normal man; his body was sacred. Written into the constitution was also the embodiment of Pedro's political philosophy and a telling statement concerning his own conception of his relationship with the state. Article ninety nine of the constitution read that "the person of the Emperor is inviolable and sacred; he is not subject to any accountability."<sup>37</sup> This simple phrase, coupled with the moderating power, placed Pedro in an unassailable position as the "embodiment of the national will."<sup>38</sup>

By placing his person at an unassailable position as "sacred and inviolable," conservative editors separated Pedro from the people he ruled and his equated his person with the nation. Hence, any attempt to limit his role in the state, as attempted in the "Letter of Sovereignty that opened this chapter, became an attack against the state. In response to the "Letter of Sovereignty," the editor of the *Echo* argued:

In the constitutional system, a sole individual is sanctioned by religious unction, and elevated to a position of impeccability and inviolability and with the prerogative of censuring and [thus] is invested with sovereignty. This investiture is consecrated by the imprescribable right of primogeniture. This is the source of legitimacy for all the kings of Europe.<sup>39</sup>

This brief assessment links together the key elements of the conservative platform: his birthright elevated Pedro to the role of sovereign. Consequently, he received the sanction of

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<sup>37</sup>Quoted in Barman, *Brazil*, 125.

<sup>38</sup>Barman, *Brazil*, 125.

<sup>39</sup>*L'Echo de la Amerique du Sud*, 5 March 1828, #69.

the church and became inviolable in front of the law. Pedro filled all the requirements for sovereignty prescribed in European monarchies. Therefore, he was legitimate.

### *Liberals*

Not surprisingly, liberal editors had a different conception of the importance of Pedro to the political system and the meaning of the constitution. In the midst of the debate over the “Letter of Sovereignty,” Luiz Augusto May of the *Malagueta* was quick to add that he did not care what other nations did or how other leaders were termed. “Any practice or method of referring to Chiefs of other Nations,” he wrote, “is not sufficient to destroy our own Constitution that speaks of title and treatment of our own chief.”<sup>40</sup> For this author, it was up to the people of Brazil, and not the experiences of European monarchs, to decide the direction of the new nation. Several other liberal editors echoed the sentiments of the *Malagueta* regarding the differences between New World legitimacy and the “Royal or Noble despotism” of the Old World.<sup>41</sup> The editor of the *Aurora Fluminense* wrote that “the doctrine of Divine Right, or Regal Power, which cannot be seriously sustained, still can count a great number of defenders and panegyrists.”<sup>42</sup> The editor of the *Nova Luz* even found humorous “the forces employed in defending legitimacy in the style of Europe.” “The idea that it came from heaven and is injected in beings by grace of the Holy Spirit” was

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<sup>40</sup>*Malagueta*, n/d [1828].

<sup>41</sup>*Astrea*, 27 February 1830, #538.

<sup>42</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 22 February 1828, #19.



ludicrous.<sup>43</sup> The *Astrea* summed up the liberal position neatly: “We are in America. Leave in America what is American and in Europe what is European. A Brazilian is an American. This name is enough to fill us with pride.”<sup>44</sup>

The ideological position of the liberal editors was not monolithic, though. While there were no official political parties until 1837, the varying positions can be grouped into two broad categories: moderate (*moderado*) and radical (*exaltado*).<sup>45</sup> Even then, there was no clear line that separated these groups and some moderates supported similar positions to the radicals. As political events spiraled out of the control of the emperor and the impending crisis loomed large, the differences between the liberals slowly faded away to present a single opposition position. The most radical of the *exaltado* positions (republicanism, federation) was pushed aside by the majority of opposition newspapers. The moderates and most of the radicals never called for the dissolution of the empire or the abdication of the emperor. Rather, they asked for a change in relations between the ‘people’ and the monarch.<sup>46</sup> They called for popular sovereignty within a constitutional monarchy.

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<sup>43</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 4 June 1830, #50.

<sup>44</sup>*Astrea*, 17 July 1830, #590.

<sup>45</sup>Needell, “Party Formation and State-Making.” José Murilo de Carvalho, *A Construção da Ordem: A Elite Política Imperial*, (Rio: Relume Dumará, 1996).

<sup>46</sup>There were numerous times where the radicals in the court and the provinces were marginalized by more mainstream liberal opposition leaders. From the silencing of the radicals in the Confederação do Equador, which saw the execution of the radical newspaper editor Frei Caneca, to the continued attacks on the editor of the fluminense paper *A Malagueta*, Luis Augusto May, to the assassination of the São Paulo editor Libero Badaro, ultra-radical newspaper editors faced constant attacks from both the conservatives in power and the mainstream liberal opposition. Jeffrey Mosher writes about the radical editor of the *República*, Antonio Borges da Fonseca: “what set him apart from other radicals was his insistent republican stance, which led him to oppose whichever of the two main parties of the Monarchy was in power. Thus he was brought up on charges of libel by both the conservative and liberal administration.” Mosher, “Political Mobilization.” See also Mosher, “Challenging Authority,” and Chasteen, “Cautionary Tale.” For Borges da Fonseca’s interpretation of his marginalization, see the political tract that is as close as we come to an autobiography: Antonio Borges da Fonseca, *Manifesto Político, Apontamentos de Minha Vida Política e da Vida Política do Dr. Urbano Sabino Pessoa de Melo*, (Recife: Typ. Commercial de G. H. de Mira, 1867).

## Moderates

The classic moderate position entailed a belief that the nation did owe a debt to Pedro, and for that reason he should be respected as emperor. The *Espelho Diamantino* wrote that “it would be ungrateful here to not recognize that the Constitutionality [of Brazil] is owed to the Emperor D. Pedro.” Pedro “fulfilled his glorious destiny, and lived a life full of heroism.”<sup>47</sup> It was worth remembering that “this Prince [who] marched at the front of us” saved Brazil “from the horrors of anarchy.”<sup>48</sup> It was these horrors that ensured the moderates, who were tied to the wealthy landed elite and valued stability above all, continued to support the right of Pedro to rule.

It was also not uncommon for a moderate editor to use religious imagery similar to the conservative conception of the emperor, but rarely did that connection to God position Pedro above responsibility to the common man. Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga of the *Aurora Fluminense*, the most respected and powerful moderate editor, framed his discussion of Pedro’s decision to remain in Brazil in 1821 in religious terms: “A Prince,” he wrote, “that Providence has left in the middle of us, embraced voluntarily our cause, declared himself Brazilian, [and] thus earned the honor of ruling us by the unanimous choice of our recent political association [legislative assembly].”<sup>49</sup> This rhetorical double-edged sword first claims Pedro was brought from the heavens. However, the editor continued by stating that Pedro earned the right to be chosen by the people. Essentially, even though Pedro was

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<sup>47</sup>*Espelho Diamantino*, 4 December 1827, #6

<sup>48</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 4 January 1830, #285.

<sup>49</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 10 September 1830, #385.

brought to the Brazilian people by God, he still needed to prove his worth and become Brazilian before the people would choose him to be their emperor. This is a far cry from the norm of the hereditary monarchies in the Old World, and it presented a significant challenge to the conservative conception of Pedro's legitimacy.

The position of the moderates was not static. Evaristo da Veiga began his 10 April 1830 edition with: "no one denies the services that D. Pedro gave to our Independence when he removed the difficulties that may have stopped us on the road we followed." While this is a classic moderate position, the editor continued, "but it also cannot be doubted that the only legitimacy he has among us is from the National Will, and it was this that elevated Sr. D. Pedro to the Constitutional throne of Brazil."<sup>50</sup> This statement earned a rebuke from a leading conservative newspaper. "The *Aurora*," wrote the editor of the *Moderador*, "should leave to the obscure editors of the provinces the foolishness published respecting legitimacy without the least idea of what it is."<sup>51</sup>

## Radicals

The radical editors agreed with much of the moderate position. While some editors did argue for the extreme political positions of a republic or a federation (Antonio Borgês da Fonseca of the *República*, and many authors of letters to the editor of the *Astrea*), the majority of the radical editors couched their opposition in more moderate terms. The essential issue up for debate was choice. The *Tribuna do Povo*, one of the most outspoken

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<sup>50</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 10 April 1830, #323.

<sup>51</sup>*Moderador*, 15 May 1830, #9.

radical liberal newspapers, placed the onus of independence squarely on the shoulders of the Brazilian people. “When Brazil proposed to give impulse to the work of its Independence,” the editor wrote, “it determined to elect a man.”<sup>52</sup> The element of election was a brazen idea in a monarchy supposedly founded on Old World principles of the legitimacy of the monarch. The *Tribuna do Povo* certainly had no historical evidence to support its claim that Brazil elected Pedro, but invoking the concept placed Pedro in an ideologically subservient role to the people he ruled.

The editor of the *Tribuna* was not without respect for the emperor, however. He wrote that Brazil “resolved to invite D. Pedro to occupy this place through motives of gratitude or because it recognized in him necessary qualities.” It “was good that D. Pedro stayed,” the editor continued. But what would have happened if he did not stay? “Brazil would have inevitably made its Independence; lacking D. Pedro it would have chosen another man.” Referring to the day of the “Fico,” when Pedro determined to cast his lot with Brazil in 1822, the editor wrote “Brazilians celebrate 9 January as the day it was certain D. Pedro would be emperor, and not because this day was the day of its salvation.”<sup>53</sup> The ultra-radical *Abelha Pernambucana* believed that Pedro was only one choice among many. Brazil “was able to constitute itself a republic; it was able to choose a Moroccan Prince, or one from France, etc, but looking on Rio it settled on D. Pedro, and since the Brazilians loved him, they honored him with the Crown of Brazil, since Brazil was independent and sovereign.”<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>*Tribuna do Povo*, 15 January 1831, #6.

<sup>53</sup>*Tribuna do Povo*, 15 January 1831, #6.

<sup>54</sup>Quoted in *Brasileiro Imparcial*, 6 April 1830, #28.

To the radicals, Pedro's person was important, but not because of his bloodline. They appreciated what he did, but if he did not do it then someone else would have.

The *Nova Luz Brasileira* wrote that Pedro was proclaimed emperor "because the Nation recognized in him all those qualities that made him deserving of the crown; because they saw that the respect of his name would save us from the convulsions of anarchy." Pedro rejected "European legitimacy [found] in absolute governments, [where] the general wish counts for nothing."<sup>55</sup> The key to this passage is the delineation between European legitimacy and Brazilian legitimacy. Clearly, for this editor the constitutional experiment of Brazil was fundamentally different than any of the political systems of the Old World. Pedro was a new emperor for a new style of politics. In a later edition of the same newspaper, the editor wrote: "legitimacy proceeds from the possession of power that has been deposited by the free will of the people, and not by force or usurpation. From here can be concluded that there is only true legitimacy in a mixed liberal government, and that in an absolute [government] it is chimerical. Legitimacy is born from opinion; by it it lasts, and by it it can end."<sup>56</sup> In direct opposition to the conservative claim of the intransigence of legitimacy and absolutism of royal bloodline, the radicals conceived of legitimacy as "a lasting privilege, but a conditional one."<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 26 January 1830, #14

<sup>56</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 13 July 1830, #59.

<sup>57</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 13 July 1830, #59.

## *Transcending the Newspapers*

Not surprisingly, conservative newspapers responded with fervor to the concept that the people had a definitive role in the independence and perpetuation of the state. The *Brasileiro Imparcial* wrote that it “was not the people of Brazil who made Pedro Emperor because in that epoch they were a part of the Portuguese nation and they did not have this power.” The editor continued, “the people of Brazil did nothing more than express their desires and their love for D. Pedro, then Prince Regent, and he accepted the desires of the people.”<sup>58</sup> The conservatives believed the positions espoused by the radicals led Brazil down a dangerous path. When the liberals “wrote that Pedro offered a constitution with the same authority as any other citizen, only an anarchist would advance such a proposition.” Pedro was vested “with the Supreme Authority of the State, with qualities uniquely inherent to his Imperial Person; who does not see the sinister ends advanced by such absurd propositions and the questions raised by creating doubts about the legitimacy” of the emperor?<sup>59</sup> And what were these ends? “To intimidate the Emperor so that He loses faith in the fidelity of his faithful subjects and, finally, to lead the people to lose confidence in the Government and their Perpetual Defender, as little by little they lose their love for him and respect for what he does.”<sup>60</sup>

But what real effect did this discussion have for the direction of the nation? Rhetorical ideas and theoretical foundations for legitimacy are easy to dismiss as having no impact or merely providing fodder for meaningless debates among pundits. Indeed, a

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<sup>58</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 17 April 1830, #31.

<sup>59</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 1 June 1830, #44.

<sup>60</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 24 July 1830, #59.

correspondent in a São Paulo newspaper wrote that he was exasperated that the newspapers were so concerned with theoretical exposition when everything else is falling down around them. “It is time we put aside empty theories in political matters: practice, practice, and only practice,” he wrote. “The English do not want to know if George IV is sovereign or not,” he continued. “They only desire the religious observation of the Constitution by the Government.”<sup>61</sup> Two events in the midst of the turmoil over the “Letter of Sovereignty” help make clear the role that the newspaper debates had in moving discussions of the political direction of the nation away from the confines of the court and into the public sphere.

The first event occurred in the theater. The theater of São Pedro, located on the Praça da Constituição, was a common meeting place for members of the elite. It was not uncommon for Pedro and his consort to attend a production, and a few newspapers carried announcements and reviews of current performances. On one night in April 1828 the performance on stage was not the center of attention. Instead, copies of a printed broadsheet were handed out to the audience, leading to both shouts of consternation and support. The broadsheet contained a sonnet signed by “A Brazilian” that directly attacked the liberal position over the sovereignty of the nation. In plain words, it amounted to a call to arms against any attempts to strip Pedro of his title.

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<sup>61</sup>*Universal* quoted in *Censor Brasileiro*, 22 April 1828, #6.

Alerta, Brasileiros, que a Anarquia  
Dos negros antros ressugir forceja;  
E, respirando estragos, só dezeja  
Curvar-vos á feroz Democracia:

Alert, Brazilians: the Anarchy  
Of the dark dens forcibly resurges  
And, breathing destruction, only desires  
To bend you to ferocious Democracy!

Na questão da Real Soberania  
Dá de suas traiçoens razão sobeja,  
Contra ella a verdade emvão troveja:  
Sustenta audaz sacrilega ousadia.

On the question of Royal Sovereignty  
It gives abundant proof of treachery.  
Truth thunders in vain  
Against its sacrilegious audacity.

Mas teme a queda do teo vôo insano;  
Elle he talvez o exforço derradeiro,  
Que tenhas de fazer; monstro inhumano!

But fear the destruction of your insane flight  
It is perhaps the last gasp  
That you will make; inhuman monster!

Sim: Defende o Brasil Pedro Primeiro;  
E para defender seu Soberano  
Há valor, honra, e sangue Brasileiro

Yes: Pedro I defends Brazil;  
And to defend their sovereign  
Brazilians offer valor, honor and blood<sup>62</sup>

When the *Astrea* printed the sonnet, the editor lamented, “how many times has Snr. Promotor accused articles in our newspaper under the pretext of attacking the governmental system, exciting fear, and promoting distrust in the government and its authorities?” What was most disturbing for the editor of the *Astrea* was not the ideas espoused by the sonnet. Indeed, the sonnet related concepts that were easily found in the newspapers. Rather, it was the “method, place, and occasion of its circulation” that upset him.<sup>63</sup> The editor of the *Astrea* was quick to publish two sonnets in response to the first one. The author of one of the rebuttal sonnets wrote as an introduction: “Dom Pedro is sovereign. I am convinced. By his constitutional virtues he is sovereign of the hearts of good Brazilians. But of Brazil! He is constitutional Emperor and Perpetual Defender. Anyone who gives him more or fewer titles is hostile to the Constitution and our Emperor and is not Brazilian.”<sup>64</sup> The sonnets used

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<sup>62</sup>*Astrea*, 12 April 1828, #269.

<sup>63</sup>*Astrea*, 12 April 1828, #269.

<sup>64</sup>*Astrea*, 19 April 1828, #272.



much of the same language as the first one and tried to turn around the ideas by changing a few words. The last stanza of one of the rebuttal sonnets provides a sense of the point at which the debate had reached:

Se pertende insultar Pedro Primeiro,  
[illegible] de Soberano  
Tu affronta não sobre o Brasileiro

You insult Pedro I  
[By referring to him?] as Sovereign  
Brazilians will not suffer your affront

Fiery debate inspired by ideas first found in the newspapers was not confined to sonnets in the theater. The arguments first espoused in the press were also aired in the legislature. On 10 May 1828 the legislature discussed the response to the speech Pedro gave to open the legislative session. These *respostas* usually were perfunctory statements that committed the legislature to act on the recommendations of the emperor. The discussion of this response would not be like the others, however. Embedded in the response was a key position in the contested liberal platform espoused by liberal editors: because of Pedro's virtues, the nation of Brazil "placed Pedro on the throne it had erected." The conservative Deputy Caetano Lopes Gama took umbrage with this statement, arguing instead that "His Majesty was acclaimed by the principle of legitimacy."

Usually, it is hard to read emotion and liveliness in the dull and lengthy legislative records, but this debate provided enough rancor, shouts, and accusations to be unmistakable in its impact. Before Lopes Gama could complete his thought he was interrupted three times by the large gallery who had come to listen to the debate. Finally, another deputy, Paula e Souza, was forced to chime in, saying "permit the illustrious Deputy to finish." He still could not resist adding his own take on Lopes Gama's statement: We "can combat him after" he finishes.

The main thread of Lopes Gama's argument was that too little was known of Pedro in Rio de Janeiro, much less the rest of the far-flung country, before the acclamation to make an informed decision of his virtues. The only way the people could be assured that Pedro was fit to rule was because of his birthright. His speech was disrupted again several times by rumbling in the gallery. Once he finished, the Deputy Lino Coutinho sprang to his feet declaring "the illustrious Deputy advanced heresies against the Constitution." "No Deputy," he continued, "should have to suffer the language that has been emitted here." Lino Coutinho elaborated the liberal position in what we now know was symptomatic of the fiery rhetoric first expressed in the newspapers:

When Brazil broke the binds of slavery and separated itself from the Kingdom [of Portugal] it was sovereign, and it was able to choose any form of government. The Nation chose a constitutional and representative system and chose for its chief the Prince Regent for his virtues.

Lino Coutinho ended his diatribe with another familiar, but worrisome, sentiment: "if the Deputy recognizes the legitimacy of the house of Braganza he should transport himself back to Portugal." His last statement was interrupted by the gallery as well, this time with applause, however.

Deputy Paula e Souza then took up the mantle of the liberals and brought the already worked-up crowd to a frenzy. He began by refuting the European conception of legitimacy: If Brazil followed the right of primogeniture, then "His Majesty would not have been able to be Emperor within the lifetime of his father, but luckily our Constitution destroyed the principle of European legitimacy." Bringing his argument to a close, the deputy declared "Sr. Lopes Gama is mistaken – Brazil is free and will be free as long as there are Brazilians."

Whipping the gallery to a frenzy that could not be calmed by the president's admonishments, Paula e Souza ended: "Never will the days of despotism return."<sup>65</sup>

Since arguments previously discussed in the press can be found embedded throughout this discussion in the legislature, it comes as no surprise that the newspapers followed the debate closely. The *Astrea* was the first to report on the discussion. The editor believed the session in the legislature "presented a show deserving the attention" of its readers. At first the editor, who claimed to have been present at the session, paid little heed to Caetano Lopes Gama because the deputy had never before attended the legislature. After asking around, the *Astrea* reported, with a hint toward corruption, that the deputy was the ex-president of Goyaz (an interior province) who apparently "preferred the lucrative presidency of an unhappy people to the honor of Legislative employment." The *Astrea* then presented a play by play of the discussion, never failing to mention the angry shouts or fervid applause that accompanied the conservative and liberal speakers, respectively.<sup>66</sup> The *Aurora Fluminense* took a different tack in its reporting of the discussion in the legislature. Instead of attacking the conservative speaker, the editor of the *Aurora* believed Lopes Gama was attacking the honor of the Emperor through his comments. Denying that the nation chose Pedro because of his merits was to state that he "usurped the crown from his father." Such a "lack of respect to the Sacred Person of Our Majesty by negating his sublime title" was an affront that Brazilians could not pardon.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>All quotations from the Legislature are from the *Annaes da Camara dos Deputados*, 1828.

<sup>66</sup>*Astrea*, 13 May 1828, #282.

<sup>67</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 14 May 1828, #43.

It may seem odd that a liberal editor would accuse a conservative of disrespect toward the emperor. In fact, liberal editors maintained their respect for the emperor throughout the First Empire. The radicals framed their increasing dissent in appeals to the emperor to protect the cause of the Brazilians and throw off the yoke of Portuguese control. Even as late as 1830 the radical press saw Pedro as a protector of their rights, rather than a despot intent on reverting Brazil to a colonial state. The first edition of the radical opposition newspaper the *Perilampo Popular* hit the streets of Rio in late November 1830. In it the editors published a five-page letter directed to Pedro. “The Brazilian Nation,” the editors began, only knew the “stupid tutelage of the Government of Portugal” until “it saw you, Senhor, full of virtues and showing it the first step to Liberty, a ray on the horizon of the Patria.” The Brazilians had only one goal: to see “you seated on the Throne of the Universe.” “Today,” however, “Brazil looks to you and does not see you!; today, Brazil runs to embrace you in its heart but finds only sadness.” Pedro himself was not the letter’s target of attack. Instead, the emperor was misguided by an “Anti-Brazilian faction” who tried to destroy the liberties of the country and who “believed [Pedro] to be talismanically tied to magic.” This faction “has compromised the honor and security of the Nation, and the glory of the Throne.” The letter ended with a veiled threat: “An absolute Prince is a slave; free is one who obeys the Laws.”<sup>68</sup> The next week another major radical newspaper, *Nova Luz Brasileira*, published a three-page letter to Pedro arguing against the Emperor’s proposed trip to the province of Minas Gerais. The letter began, “we hope that this offering will prove once more the decided adhesion that the *Nova Luz* has for the Constitutional Emperor of Brazil.” The letter went on to detail how “the absence of the Emperor from the Court and at such a distance is damaging to the Public

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<sup>68</sup>*O Perilampo Popular*, 24 November 1830, #1.

interests” and is therefore unconstitutional. “Enough,” the letter ended, “the Emperor should not go to Minas.”<sup>69</sup> Iara Lis Carvalho Souza has argued that the end of the First Empire was characterized by increasing attacks on the person of the Emperor and a gradual diminishment of respect for the monarchy.<sup>70</sup> These two letters above show that even the radical editors still respected the person of the monarch in the waning months of the First Empire. They appealed to him to reinforce the relationship they had come to expect and protect them from perceived absolutist attacks. Pedro was still seen as the legitimate ruler, but the basis of his legitimacy, in liberal eyes, forced him to attend to the needs of the people.

The discussions in the press had obviously spilled over into other arenas, both public and private. Rabble rousers in the theatre as well as legislators in the house of deputies continued arguments and debates that began in the press but could not be contained within its pages. Through the lifespan of the argument over the legitimacy of the monarch and who was the sovereign of Brazil, we can see increasing tension and the first mentions of violence as a means of defending rhetorical principles. It was the *Honra do Brasil* who reminded its readers that the cry for popular sovereignty was the main cause of the anarchy that reigned in France after the revolution. The ideas themselves were not the sole cause of the turmoil and strife of the Terror, but rather “the Power of the Demagogues, hypocritical missionaries of the Sovereignty of the People [were responsible]: those affiliated with the Newspapers and Clubs who perverted public opinion.”<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 3 December 1830, #99.

<sup>70</sup>Iara Lis Carvalho Souza, *Pátria Coroada: O Brasil como Corpo Político Autônomo – 1780-1831*, (SP: Editora UNESP, 1999), 330, 335.

<sup>71</sup>*Honra do Brasil*, 3 June 1828, #14.

## *Conclusion*

The newspaper response to the “Letter of Sovereignty” encapsulates the key points of the debate surrounding the role of Pedro and the people in First Empire Brazil’s political culture. The liberal *Astrea* wrote “there is no individual who is not able to say to the Prince: if you want a guarantee, you owe me one in return.” The conservative *Honra do Brazil* responded that “lost would be the Empire if language like this from any individual is tolerated toward the legitimate sovereign.”<sup>72</sup> The liberals believed Pedro was one of them; therefore he owed them services and favors to continue his rule. The conservatives ideologically placed Pedro above common man and saw any attack to that unassailable position as an attack against the state. To question the absolute legitimacy of the emperor was to question the foundation of the nation itself.

The liberal push in the newspapers for popular sovereignty had serious ramifications for Rio de Janeiro political culture. Editors placed the power to direct the government (albeit rhetorically at this point) squarely in the hands of the common people. By mid-1828, ideological positions espoused by newspaper editors had reached an impasse. As long as conservative editors continued to view the Emperor through the lens of European legitimacy and the liberal editors continued to call for the New World idea of popular sovereignty, the political culture of Rio was bound to reach a crisis. As the First Empire came to a close, these competing ideas would play out in the battle for control over ideas in the newspapers and, eventually, the streets.

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<sup>72</sup>*Honra do Brasil*, 20 August 1828, #31.

More important for our study, the ramifications of the liberal editors' ideas show how the press had become the central forum for debating political theories and reshaping Rio's political culture. Newspapers provided actors who were excluded from the traditional means of conducting politics a voice in the functioning of the state. The ideas that the editors and readers argued over had real effect on the streets and in the legislature of Rio de Janeiro. By providing this forum, newspapers helped transform the political culture of Rio and forced the government of Brazil to take into account hundreds, if not thousands, of new voices clamoring for attention.

This discussion of the various positions of the conservative and liberal presses coincides with a recent current in the historiography of Brazilian political thought. Kirsten Schultz has argued that "the arrival of Dom João in the New World [created] an opportunity to critique the politics, society and economy that had defined the empire and the monarchy until that point, a critique of the 'ideas of the century.'" The "transfer of the court provided for a transition from colony to empire based on political and institutional continuities and traditions, [but] it also challenged those traditions, and, ultimately, changed their meaning."<sup>73</sup> The person of the monarch, in the form of João VI, was essential to the development of the court city and to the political discussions of the independence period. For the regency period, Jeffrey Needell has found a similar understanding of the role of the monarch (or his representative) in relation to the people.<sup>74</sup> What has been presented above shows much similarity between the positions of the liberal ideologues in 1821 and 1837. This tells us that independence had not ended any of the debates of the position of the monarch in relation to

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<sup>73</sup>Schultz, "Royal Authority," 8.

<sup>74</sup>Needell, "Party Formation," 303.

the state or, essentially, where the legitimacy of the nation rested. The early experiences of the pamphleteers and editors of the independence movement established the parameters of the debate and provided a rhetorical bastion that the editors of the late First Empire tried to defend. That the debate resurfaced in the regency shows that no positions were static and the future of the Brazilian state was very much up for discussion.



CHAPTER IV:  
THE BATTLE FOR CONTROL OF THE PASSIVE PUBLIC:  
FIRST EMPIRE RIO DE JANEIRO'S CIVIC RITUALS

25 March 1831 dawned on a troubled Rio de Janeiro. Edward Theodore Bosche, a German mercenary and eyewitness to the First Empire, reported that the city seemed ready to burst. Only two weeks had passed since the street riots of the Nights of the Broken Bottles, and this date the year before had seen violence by exuberant bands of Brazilian youths celebrating the anniversary of the signing of the constitution. “Murders became each day more frequent,” he reported, “indicating to all the imminence of catastrophe.”<sup>1</sup> 25 March, he claimed, was the day set for a violent uprising by the native Brazilians under cover of celebrating the anniversary of the constitution.

The celebration began as did many other civic festivals in the Rio social calendar. First, the emperor held a *beija-mão*, hand-kissing, for the foreign dignitaries and the elite of the court. Then he traveled with his family to the Campo de Santanna on the outskirts of town where he watched the military parades that passed in front of a small rotunda erected to celebrate the day. If all went according to the plan for the official celebration, the final item

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<sup>1</sup>Eduardo Theodoro Bosche, “Quadros Alternados” *Revista Instituto Histórico Geographico Brasileiro* 83, (1918), 212.

on the agenda was to go to the imperial chapel, right across the rua Direita from the palace, to hear a mass of thanks, or a *Te Deum*.

This anniversary was not destined to go according to plan, however. From the early hours of the celebration, it was obvious that something was amiss. Goaded on by Antonio Borgês de Fonseca, the vociferous newspaper editor and street agitator, bands of youths roamed the streets during the official celebration shouting vivas to independence and the constitution. The route of the official military parade was lined with Brazilians wearing armbands on their left sleeves displaying a yellow chevron topped by a green rosette.<sup>2</sup> “It is the obligation of all the Brazilians,” the *Nova Luz Brasileira* reported the year before, “to wear their distinctive band, principally in the present epoch.” For this editor, the armband signified “total independence, patriotic union, and free Constitution.”<sup>3</sup> Wearing these armbands on this day at an official function, where the emperor was sure to be, could only have been interpreted by the court as a defiant display of nativism. After the parade it was customary to line the streets to witness Emperor Pedro I’s return to the palace, thereby ending the official celebration. Instead “all those who considered themselves Brazilian” ran to the church of São Francisco de Paula for the unofficial celebration of the day that had become symbolic of the people’s role in the foundation and perpetuation of the state.<sup>4</sup> Brazilians were on the street defiantly celebrating the document that limited the emperor’s powers and included the people in the governing of the state—an idea that suddenly needed to be defended.

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<sup>2</sup>Ernst Ebel, *O Rio de Janeiro e Seus Arredores em 1824*, Joaquim de Sousa Leão Filho trans. (SP: Companhia Ed. Nacional, 1972), 10.

<sup>3</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 16 April 1830, #37.

<sup>4</sup>*Brasileiro Offendido*, 30 March 1831, #2.

While the rest of the imperial family returned to the palace and then on to the imperial chapel for the official mass, Pedro decided to take a different course. Faced with increasing criticism in the press, the emperor broke the mold of staid celebration. Attended by only a handful of guards, the emperor rode to the church of São Francisco to join the unofficial celebration of the people. His attendance took the crowd by surprise, but it did not have the effect desired by the emperor. Perhaps a few years earlier the presence of Pedro at a similar event would have elicited shouts of joy from the people; this day only shouts of anger and dismay greeted the emperor. His imperial person no longer commanded the power it once did. Someone at the doors of the church barred Pedro's way by stating the mass was only for the Brazilians. "Am I not also a Brazilian?" Pedro defiantly responded.<sup>5</sup> The people allowed him to enter the church where he was witness to an oration by Monte Alverne, one of the foremost orators of the day and also a "member of secret liberal societies."<sup>6</sup> The theme of the homily was an exposition on the evils of colonialism and the importance of 25 March in ending the "corruption and ignorance" of the preceding three hundred years. Pedro received his position, the orator argued, from the people who thereby "resolved the theory of legitimacy."<sup>7</sup> But when he got up to leave, Pedro was faced with a mob that threatened more than his legitimacy. Instead of *vivas* showering down from all sides of the square, Pedro was faced with shouts of defiance. One reveler even raised the call of "Long Live Emperor Pedro

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<sup>5</sup>Tobias Monteiro, *História do Império: O Primeiro Reinado*, (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1982), vol. II, 198.

<sup>6</sup>Iara Lis Carvalho Souza, "1831: D. Pedro I e a Praça Pública," *Anais Museu Histórico Nacional*, 30, (1998), 52.

<sup>7</sup>Excerpts of Monte Alverne's oration appears in Monteiro, *História do Império*, vol. 2, 199.

II” in reference to the minor hereditary prince. Pedro I replied angrily “He is but a child yet,” and he added that the current ruler was more than fit to continue his reign.<sup>8</sup>

This episode raises several interesting questions for analysis. Why did the people focus on this day to gather and express their displeasure toward the emperor? Why did they gather in the Praça de São Francisco? What was the importance of Pedro’s arrival at the church? While the previous chapter discussed the importance of Pedro’s person to the political structure of Rio and began to show how increasing attacks by the press diminished that power, this chapter will show how the press used the civic rituals of Rio’s political liturgy to either reinforce the connection of Pedro to the state or emphasize the role of the people in the state.

This chapter will examine the way the press reported and interpreted the three main civic holidays of late First Empire Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (25 March, 7 September, 12 October). A close reading of both the conservative and opposition newspapers indicates that the press provided an arena to contest discursive control of the rituals. As we saw in chapter III, Pedro ruled in the style of late medieval hereditary monarchs; his person, in theory and in practice, represented the state. Through the celebration of invented traditions, the conservative newspapers perpetuated the idea that Pedro had started the nation and that the nation continued to exist through his continued presence in it. They used the celebrations of these three civic rituals to reinforce social order and legitimize the rule of the emperor. For the conservatives, the role of the people of Rio de Janeiro was only to witness the grandeur of Pedro’s court. Interpretations were not limited to the official viewpoint, however. Opposition editors contested the official vision of the state with their own impressions and

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<sup>8</sup>John Armitage *The History of Brazil* (NY: AMS Press, 1970 [1836]), vol. II, 125; Neill Macaulay, *Dom Pedro: The Struggle for Liberty in Brazil and Portugal*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986), 248.

opinions of these civic rituals. They did not wholly accept the state's definition of how the country was founded and what aspects of the political past should be celebrated. Essentially, the editors believed that the origins and perpetuation of the nation resided elsewhere—namely, in the will of the people. Therefore, liberals rhetorically wielded the public at every opportunity to show that Pedro's ability to rule came from the very people he ruled. Liberal editors used their reporting of civic rituals to reinterpret the foundation of the state and the role of the people.

Control of the meaning of civic rituals was an essential element of First Empire political culture. As James Epstein writes in his discussion of nineteenth-century English rituals, “the authority to give accent or meaning to such signs is part of the exercise of political power.” More importantly for our study, Epstein continues: “struggles to enforce or destabilize such meanings often define the contested terrain of politics.”<sup>9</sup> The meaning of First Empire political rituals was contested and debated in the press; therefore, the meaning of the state was contested and debated as well. Editors tried to control the meanings of rituals by controlling how they were reported and analyzed in the press. This was something that the conservative editors were accustomed to doing and had had success with in the past. However, as political events spiraled out of their control, and the press became a viable vehicle for the expression of dissenting views, they lost control of the meanings of the rituals. While in earlier accounts the rituals revolved around Pedro—his acts or his person—the opposition press increasingly offered a different interpretation that re-evaluated the origins of the nation and indicated a shift in the political culture of First Empire Brazil.

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<sup>9</sup>James Epstein, *Radical Expression: Political Language, Ritual, and Symbol in England, 1790-1850*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 71.

Analyses of discourse, the use of space, and religious and secular imagery have developed our understanding of the context in which Latin Americans constructed their lives. An increasing number of scholars have used political rituals to discuss the dynamics of power. The celebration of rituals has been interpreted from two angles. First, rituals can be looked at as a way of reinforcing the aims of the state, whether those aims are to legitimize the state's rule, reinforce social status and hierarchy, or enforce control over a potentially unruly populace. The second angle for the interpretation of rituals is through the contestation of their meaning. In the Latin American context, scholars have examined rituals as ways the state reinforced hegemony—in the colonial period—or established itself as the legitimate authority in the early independence period. Kirsten Schoutz sees the civic festivals of Dom João's court as an effort to "project the simpler and more fundamental hierarchy of sovereign and vassal," and Iara Lis Carvalho Souza sees the continuation of the "*liturgia real*" in the independence period to reinforce loyalty to the monarch and the accepted social norms.<sup>10</sup> Increasingly, historians are coming to see the meaning of rituals constantly in contest. Scholars who study diverse areas of Latin America have written on the contestation of ritual, either between the elite and the popular classes, the free and the slave populations, competing elites, or local interests and abstract national interests.<sup>11</sup> One common thread throughout all

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<sup>10</sup>Kirsten Schultz, *Tropical Versailles: Empire, Monarchy, and the Portuguese Royal Court in Rio de Janeiro, 1808 – 1821*, (NY: Routledge, 2001), 155; Iara Lis Carvalho Souza, *Pátria Coroada: O Brasil como Corpo Político Autônomo, 1780-1831*, and "Liturgia Real: Entre a Permanência e o Efêmero," *Festa: Cultura e Sociabilidade na América Portuguesa*, István Jancsó, ed., (São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 1999).

<sup>11</sup>Sandra Lauderdale Graham, among others, discusses the role of entrudo (an early form of carnival) and other popular festivals as events that overturned the social hierarchy for a brief time. Graham saw the entrudo celebrations as a social safety valve that served to keep the lower classes in line for the rest of the calendar year. Sandra Lauderdale Graham, *House and Street: The Domestic World of Servants and Masters in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Cheryl English Martin sees celebrations that briefly invert the social hierarchy in a different light. Cabildo members of Chihuahua during the late colonial period expressly forbade any inversion to maintain stability in a frontier region where the maintenance of order was a primary concern. Cheryl English Martin, "Public Celebrations, Popular Culture, and Labor Discipline in Eighteenth-Century Chihuahua," *Rituals of Rule, Rituals of Resistance: Public Celebrations*

the recent historiography on rituals is that rituals are “deliberate manifestations by influential actors who, through the promotion of such events, attempt to model the collective memory to the service of a determined project.”<sup>12</sup>

While many scholars have examined how rituals and festivals were used by participants to interact with the established power structures of the period, what is missing from the literature is how the periodical press aided this interaction and, often, contestation.<sup>13</sup> Used as evidence for a discussion of issues beyond the press, the press itself remains underanalyzed as a forum for the control of the meanings of nineteenth-century rituals. All these interpretations see festivals and rituals as sites “of local political action, of conflict and consensus” but ignore the role played by the press in controlling information about rituals and redefining the state through alternate interpretations.<sup>14</sup> Like newspapers, rituals were a

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*and Popular Culture in Mexico*, Edited by William H. Beezley, Cheryl English Martin, William E. French, (Wilmington, Del: SR Books, 1994). See also Eric Van Young, “Conclusion: The State as Vampire – Hegemonic Projects, Public Ritual, and Popular Culture in Mexico, 1600 – 1990,” in *Rituals of Rule*. For Brazil, Hendrik Kraay examines how the elite of Bahia in the nineteenth century used the festival to commemorate 2 July to “send a clear and homogenous message to the population: loyalty to the Emperor, submission to the authorities, identification with Brazil and with the Imperial regime.” He goes on to examine how the “homogenous message” was not swallowed wholly by the people who participated in and witnessed the rituals, however. Hendrik Kraay, “Definindo Nação e Estado: Rituais Cívicos na Bahia Pós-Independência,” *Topoi: Revista de História*, 3, (2001), 77. See also Hendrik Kraay, “Between Brazil and Bahia: Celebrating Dois de Julho in Nineteenth-Century Salvador,” *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 31, (1999).

<sup>12</sup>Lucia Maria Paschoal Guimarães, “Tiradentes: Festa da Clemência, Festa da Contra Revolução,” *A Festa: Comunicações Apresentadas no VIII Congresso Internacional*, (Lisbon: Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos do Século XVIII, 1992), vol. I, 116.

<sup>13</sup>Davis argues for the United States: “although print media became unprecedentedly important in the early nineteenth century, the period’s social history reveals that American city dwellers often used collective gatherings and vernacular dramatic techniques – reading aloud, oratory, festivals, work stoppages, mass meetings, and parades – to propose ideas about social relations.” I agree that the dominant form of social discussion was still oral and visual, but the print media interpreted and shaped the meaning of the oral and visual representations and disseminated editors’ interpretations to a wider audience. Susan G. Davis, *Parades and Power: Street Theatre in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 4.

<sup>14</sup>Waldstreicher sees a similar problem in the historiography of the American Revolution: “what is lacking in the historiography is ... an understanding of the relationship between local street theater and the nation: a relationship that came into being through the mediation of print.” David Waldstreicher, “Rites of Rebellion, Rites of Assent: Celebrations, Print Culture, and the Origins of American Nationalism,” *Journal of American History*, 82 no. 1, (June 1995): 37.

form of communication.<sup>15</sup> The state communicated to the masses orally and symbolically through representing the government on the streets.<sup>16</sup> The communication did not stop there, however. Newspaper editors filtered the intended message of the state through the lens of their newspapers, thereby reinterpreting, and often challenging, the vision of the state. Newspaper interpretations of civic rituals help us understand the interplay of the state and the people it ruled. The press provided the battleground where the weapons of allegorical imagery, discourse, space, and the presence (or absence) of Pedro I were all used in the fight to control meaning.

Two key points emerge from an analysis of newspaper accounts of First Empire civic rituals. First, editors practically applied abstract theories of legitimacy and popular sovereignty through their interpretations of civic rituals. While the previous chapter focused on the theoretical discussions of the position of the monarch in Brazil's constitutional empire, this chapter will focus on how editors put those positions into play through their reporting. Second, this discussion exposes how the newspaper editors battled for control of the passive public. In chapter I, we saw how editors and newspapers made it possible for the public to act within the public sphere. Then, in chapter II, we saw how liberal editors called on their readers and listeners to act, a call that more than two thousand letter writers heeded. In this chapter, we will see how and why the editors used the larger, and no less important, passive public to add power to their arguments and support their push for governmental change.

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<sup>15</sup>“Festivals were the most powerful expression of local culture. Street performances that reflected social relations developed as significant modes of communication.” Di Wang, “Street Culture: Public Space and Urban Commoners in Late-Qing Chengdu,” *Modern China*, 24, no. 1, (January 1998): 47

<sup>16</sup>Richard A. Warren, *Vagrants and Citizens: Politics and the Masses in Mexico City from Colony to Republic*, (Wilmington, Del.: SR Books, 2001), xiii.



## ***Rituals***

The official intent of political rituals in the First Empire was to legitimize the rule of Pedro through reinforcing his role as the founder of the nation. Rituals provided a “symbolic framework” whereby the court “set goals for the community by referring to the great era of heroism as a model of action and achievement.”<sup>17</sup> A government is obviously concerned with legitimacy and stability.<sup>18</sup> But how does a government garner legitimacy? One way is through what Eric Hobsbawm terms “invented traditions.” Invented traditions are “responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations.”<sup>19</sup> They are public displays of social cohesion that make a connection to a legitimate force, either a comfortable shared past, a symbol that is understood on face value, or a ritual that, through repetition and peer pressure, creates a unifying link among an otherwise disparate population. These public displays become “political acts [that] have pragmatic objectives, and concrete, often material, results.” In a sense, rituals are “tools for building, maintaining, and confronting power relations.”<sup>20</sup>

Pedro understood the political power of public spectacle and filled the calendar with civic rituals. Holidays, festivals, and rituals were an almost daily occurrence in First Empire Rio de Janeiro. The Protestant soldier Bosche wrote derisively concerning the incessant

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<sup>17</sup>Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1986), 201.

<sup>18</sup>Since, according to Marco Morel, legitimacy is “the psychological acceptance by the members of a given community of a series of institutional and relationship arguments that would determine and control their political life” the state had to establish itself as the sole legitimate force in the minds of the public. Marco Morel, *Cipriano Barata na Sentinela da Liberdade*, (Salvador: Academica de Letras da Bahia, 2001), xv.

<sup>19</sup>Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 2.

<sup>20</sup>Davis, *Parades*, 6.

celebrating: “Religious festivals, processions, and other farces with which the clergy try to occupy the imagination of the population have no end. The incessant ringing of the innumerable church bells destroy the thinking of all rational men.”<sup>21</sup> More than a day off from work or a nuisance to travelers, however, public festivals were a time to fulfill valuable social obligations and helped set the rhythm of early imperial daily life. In his classic work on Brazilian *festas*, Roberto DaMatta contends “that rituals are social creations reflecting the basic problems and dilemmas of the society that produces them.” For DaMatta, “myth and ritual are dramatizations or crucial ways of calling attention to certain aspects of social reality, aspects that are normally submerged by everyday routines, indifferences, and other similar complications.”<sup>22</sup> Looked at in this way, what days were chosen to be celebrated and how they were celebrated reveal important aspects of Rio de Janeiro social life.

Pedro’s experiences as part of Dom João’s court provided him with numerous examples of civic rituals. Kirsten Schultz recreates the “Tropical Versailles” of Dom João’s court where, during state-sponsored festivals, “illuminated facades transformed the city into a stage for private and public ceremonies, processions through triumphal arches, and the dancing, fireworks, and in some cases free theatrical performances that followed, all of which aimed to spectacularly display the majesty of the House of Braganza.”<sup>23</sup> While during the colonial period the painted portrait of the prince regent often stood in for the person of the monarch, when the court moved to Rio the rhythm of courtly life “served to fulfill the Portuguese monarch’s duty to show himself.”<sup>24</sup> Dom João was trying to recreate the

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<sup>21</sup>Bosche, “Quadros Alternados,” 175.

<sup>22</sup>Roberto DaMatta, *Carnivals, Rogues, and Heroes*, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 25.

<sup>23</sup>Schultz, *Tropical Versailles*, 154-155.

<sup>24</sup>Schultz, *Tropical Versailles*, 155.

experience of the Lisbon court. While this was effective in gaining the loyalty of a Brazilian populace who, at that time, valued political equality with Portugal, by his son's reign similarities to courts in the Old World were decidedly out of fashion.

While João had centuries of royal tradition to draw from, Pedro's court was faced with an interesting dilemma when it came to choosing which rituals to celebrate and which days to remember. The court of Pedro I felt a need to reinforce its legitimacy because of the context surrounding the first few years of the Empire. The *Grito do Ipiranga* of 7 September 1822 did not constitute a revolution in the sense of completely overturning the political system. Further, Pedro had become emperor through a legal maneuver, rather than through the death of his father or a prolonged military campaign. Therefore, the new state found it necessary to invent a tradition of stability and legitimacy for the new governmental structure.<sup>25</sup> One way the state imbued events with significance was to schedule them on dates that already carried political, religious, or social importance. The state tried to add legitimacy to important events early in its existence by capitalizing on already existing, and respected, holidays. It was no accident that Dom João was acclaimed king of Brazil on Ash Wednesday, or that Pedro entered the provincial capital of Minas Gerais triumphantly during Holy Week of 1823, evoking images of Jesus entering Jerusalem.<sup>26</sup> The two monarchs coupled civic holidays with religious ones to add an otherworldly legitimacy and weight to their actions. Birthdays of the royals were the most heavily used for various events. João's birthday, 13 May, was slotted for the opening of the national printing-house, while Pedro's birthday, 12 October, was burdened with civic events. 12 October saw the foundation of the

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<sup>25</sup>Souza, *Patria Coroadada*, 256.

<sup>26</sup>Souza, *Patria Coroadada*, 215.

Bank of Brazil, the opening of the theater on the Praça de Constituição, and, as we will see below, the acclamation of Pedro as emperor.

1 December presents a complicated case of the sharing of dates. It was the day chosen for Pedro's coronation, but it also happened to be the day that the Portuguese celebrated their independence from Spain in 1640. The fact that this day was chosen for Pedro's coronation could have two different readings. First, the day was already an important legitimizing element in the Portuguese political calendar. It was one of the earliest days of civic celebration for the Portuguese monarchy, and Pedro was a direct descendent of the dynasty. Coupling the two perhaps could help stabilize Pedro's claim to the throne of his ancestors. On the other hand, the sharing of dates could be interpreted as a dominance of one over the other. In effect, the new monarchy was replacing the old one – or the New World was in ascendance while the Old World declined. The Reverend Robert Walsh believed:

Like Napoleon, [Pedro] had attached a certain prestige to particular days; and as his acclamation was made on that of his birth as a political new birth, so this of his coronation was the anniversary of the deliverance of Portugal from the Spanish yoke, as it was intended to commemorate that of Brazil from the yoke of Portugal.<sup>27</sup>

Whatever the significance of this particular holiday, 1 December provides an example of how events in Brazil's early civic calendar could be read in various ways, depending on the participant or the onlooker.

The largest challenge facing Pedro throughout his entire reign was to convince Brazilians that he had their best interests in mind. Increasingly, his opponents felt that he was not 'Brazilian' enough to rule the country; his loyalties lay elsewhere. Hence, the legitimizing rituals of his reign all concerned his Brazilian-ness and reinforced his connection

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<sup>27</sup>Rev. R. Walsh, *Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829*, (Boston: Richardson et al, 1831), vol. I, 132.

to the people. In the late First Empire, five days connected to some event in Brazil's political past—however artificially constructed—were celebrated. They were 9 January, when Pedro decided to ignore the call from the Portuguese legislature to return to Portugal; 25 March, the day that Pedro signed the constitution, which he wrote in 1824 after dismissing the constituent assembly a year earlier; 3 May, the date that the Legislature first met in 1826; 7 September, the day Pedro supposedly shouted “Independence or Death” along the banks of the Ipiranga river in 1822; and 12 October, the birthday of the emperor. Four of these five rituals revolved around the person of the emperor.<sup>28</sup> Essentially, Pedro was the source of the “invented traditions” that surrounded and celebrated the young empire. To maintain his popularity in the court, Pedro used ritual to reinforce his legitimacy through his personal presence and his connection with certain legitimizing attributes of the young nation. In this way, Brazilian political rituals were similar to nineteenth-century American parades where “constituent groups in the polity actually presented themselves, rather than abstract symbols, for public view.”<sup>29</sup> In many religious rituals, Pedro was seen at the head of the procession, or even carrying the image through the streets. Reverend Walsh related what he witnessed during one Ash Wednesday religious procession: “a number of persons entered the church, and one of them humbly kneeling down close beside me, placed his shoulder under the pole of the platform, and lifted it up. It was of considerable weight, and required no small muscular exertion, and while I looked in the face of the strong man who supported it, I

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<sup>28</sup>Kraay, “Definindo Nação e Estado,” 67.

<sup>29</sup>Mary Ryan, “The American Parade: Representations of the Nineteenth-Century Social Order,” *The New Cultural History*, Lynn Hunt, ed., (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 137.

perceived he was the Emperor.”<sup>30</sup> By acting in the rituals most attended by the people, Pedro placed his person on display for all to see, thereby reinforcing his connection to the people.

Interestingly, the newspapers of the period almost never reported the events of a non-political ritual or festival. Non-reporting of festival events could be used as good evidence for an argument that the urban areas of Brazil were still oral communities. More importantly, however, it indicates that festivals were so common that what actually happened did not need to be discussed. This is in some ways a limitation; we only know about what actually occurred during a festival from traveler’s accounts, memoir writers, or foreign newspapers.<sup>31</sup> Hence, we have to turn to the French-language newspaper *L’Echo de L’America du Sud* to know that Pedro held a reception at São Christovão to celebrate his birthday in 1827 where he received “homages of the principal dignitaries of the Empire,” went to the Campo de Santanna for a military review and held a *beija-mão* at the palace at noon, followed by a presentation of his royal person on the balcony.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, we have to turn to the German mercenary Bosche to read that to get from the Campo to the Palace, the members of the royal family were drawn through the streets by eight horses, “followed by a truly magnificent honor guard composed of the sons of the most wealthy families.”<sup>33</sup> This limitation is actually an asset because we can be sure that when we do read about the details of a particular

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<sup>30</sup>Walsh, *Notices of Brazil*, II, 211; see also Bosche, “Quadros Alternadas,” 175.

<sup>31</sup>“The majority of journalistic reports about these festivals—rarely are accounts found in manuscript form—offers little indications about the significance of the commemorations for the men and women who watched them or who participated in them.” Kraay, “Definindo Nação e Estado,” 65.

<sup>32</sup>*L’Echo de L’America du Sud*, 13 October 1827, #30. For other primary accounts of Brazilian royal and early Imperial festivals see Jean Baptiste Debret, *Viagem Pitoresca e Histórica ao Brasil*, (SP: Livraria Martins, 1940 [1839]); John Luccock, *Notes on Rio de Janeiro and the Southern Parts of Brazil*, (London: Samuel Leigh, 1820); Walsh, *Notices of Brazil*, Maria Dundas Graham (Lady Maria Calcott), *Journal of a Voyage to Brazil*, (NY: Frederick A. Praeger, 1969 [1824]); and Luiz Gonçalves dos Santos (Padre Perereca), *Memórias para Servir à História do Reino do Brasil*, (Rio: Zelio Valverde, 1943 [1825]).

<sup>33</sup>Bosche, “Quadros Alternados,” 166.

celebration in the newspapers, there is usually a good reason. If the writer is Brazilian writing in Portuguese about what actually occurred during a festival, he is probably writing to make a strong point. For example, if an author wanted to stress the importance of a ritual for political reasons, or wanted to emphasize a particular aspect, like the involvement of the people, then details of the ritual celebration would be included. The editor of the *Brasileiro Imparcial* knew he was acting anomalously by reporting on the events that marked the anniversary of Pedro's birthday in 1830, but he explained it away for patriotic reasons: "Perhaps someone will accuse us of being servile by publishing this resume of the festivals that were made in praise of His Majesty; but we will respond that the true supporter of the constitution should not neglect to render adorations to a Generous Prince, the model of those of this century."<sup>34</sup> The editor turned what would normally be considered extraneous or redundant into a political statement used to separate factions.

As we will see in the next chapter, events by October 1830 had begun to spiral out of the control of Pedro and his court and the celebration of the monarch's birthday was only discussed in the conservative, pro-administration newspapers. The liberal opposition newspapers all pointedly ignored the celebration, so when the Portuguese citizen Custodio de Oliveira Lima wrote in the conservative *Verdadeiro Patriota* that Pedro received "by all the streets the *vivas* of the people who ran in crowds to see the Entity to whom all obligations are owed," he discussed the celebrations as a political point of pride or defiance.<sup>35</sup> Likewise, after his brief discussion of the celebrations to mark the anniversary of the constitution in 1830, the editor of the *Aurora Fluminense* remarked, "We will not be more extensive in the

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<sup>34</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 16 October 1830, #84.

<sup>35</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 13 October 1830, #4.

relation of the festivities of 25 March, and it will be enough to say that few have been more brilliant.”<sup>36</sup> This understated remark places the celebration temporally and emphasizes the importance of the day to the reading public.

Only rituals that had contested meanings or interpretations were discussed in the press. Religious ceremonies were, on the whole, not discussed in the period newspapers. Although the calendar was full of them, their meaning was not up for debate; they were not contested so there was no reason to discuss them in the press. What was up for debate was the meaning of the main civic rituals that the court used to impress upon its subjects the official interpretation of the founding and perpetuation of the state. The state chose particular days to celebrate. These civic holidays reinforced the accepted version of the nation’s founding. Increasingly, opposition editors attacked the accepted version of events, thereby threatening the legitimacy of the state.

### ***Competing Interpretations of Brazil’s***

#### ***Foundational Rituals***

While the state chose to hold events on particular dates to add a special level of meaning or take advantage of an already existing social, political, or religious meaning, the existence of the political press ensured the state was unable to control all interpretations. The two different political groups, roughly divided here into conservative and liberal, viewed the celebrations differently, and, consequently, focused their reporting on different aspects.

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<sup>36</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 29 March 1830, #318.



Editors used the opportunities provided by civic rituals to put into practice the theoretical interpretations discussed in the previous chapter. The role of the people is the single most defining position for the two groups vying for the public's attention. While the conservatives stressed the importance of Pedro in both the founding and the perpetuation of the state, the liberals elided Pedro's role almost completely in favor of a dominant role for the people. The two sides used their reporting of the three most important civic holidays, 12 October, 7 September, and 25 March, to battle for rhetorical control of Brazil's foundational rituals. For the conservatives, Pedro was the source of the legitimacy of the nation. His acts brought the nation into being and his person ensured the continuance of the nation. For the liberals, Pedro did have a role in the origins and perpetuation of the nation. However, he was given that role by the people. The people had chosen him to be their emperor, and by their continued belief in him and support of him he was allowed to rule.

### *12 October*

On no other day were the two contrasting interpretations of the role of the people in the state displayed as clearly as on 12 October. The conservatives focused solely on the fact that Pedro was born on that day. The liberals, on the other hand, almost never mentioned that 12 October was the emperor's birthday. For them, the role of the people in choosing their emperor was the main event to remember. For the *Aurora Fluminense*, it was unimportant that 12 October was "also the anniversary of the Prince." It was more worthy of note that this

day celebrated “the great day in which the Nation elevated Dom Pedro to the throne.”<sup>37</sup> An examination of conservative newspaper reporting of 12 October celebrations indicates how the state tried to control interpretations and how the editors colluded with the state to disseminate the accepted interpretations.

The conservative editors saw Pedro’s birthday and his acclamation as seamlessly intertwined; both the emperor and the Empire were born on that day. The conservative newspapers’ reports of 12 October are full of flowery praise for the person of Pedro. The *Brasileiro Imparcial* spent almost the entire edition of 12 October 1830 lauding Pedro and discussing the importance of the imperial person to the foundation and continued existence of the nation. In the first paragraph of his exposition on the merits of the emperor, the editor stated flatly, “without this day there would be no Empire, Independence, or Constitution.” He defended this statement by explaining that the nation of Brazil broke away from Portugal through the efforts and actions of Pedro. Pedro proclaimed it independent, and then he gave it a constitution. The editor acknowledged that Pedro dissolved the constitutional assembly in 1823 but advertised that “all the illustrious people know how relevant the service was” that the emperor accomplished for his subjects. The editor then related how the continual presence of Pedro as monarch was the glue that has kept the nation together. Hence, 12 October was more important than 7 September and 25 March; if that day did not exist, then there would be no Brazil.<sup>38</sup>

The editor of the conservative *Moderador* agreed that Pedro’s birthday was “the most memorable day of Brazil.” Even an impending downpour could not dampen spirits during

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<sup>37</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 12 October 1829, #251.

<sup>38</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 12 October 1830, #83.

the celebration of 1830. Indeed, the threatening weather surely “would have turned the morning melancholy if the remembrances of celebration that this anniversary brought to memory” did not buoy up the hearts of the celebrants. The imperial family was on hand in the morning to witness the military parade in Pedro’s honor, but they soon returned to the drier confines of the palace where “the members of the diplomatic corps, and the most brilliant members of the court had the honor of presenting themselves” to Pedro.<sup>39</sup> After the military parade, a select public, an official and well-known public, had the privilege of kissing Pedro’s ring. These *beija-mãos* were a regular occurrence in the First Empire. They were a way for Pedro’s clients to meet their patron and apply for his aid. Eduardo Silva, in his *Prince of the People* believes that “such compliments to the emperor constituted a privileged political forum.” *Beija-mãos* “were a point of personal contact between the Emperor and the rest of society.”<sup>40</sup> The ritual did not start or end with Pedro I. It was practiced infrequently by João VI, while Pedro II held *beija-mãos* even more frequently than his father. In theory, these ceremonial events were open to all, though usually only the core of the favored court members attended.<sup>41</sup>

Silvério Mariano Quevedo de Lacerda, editor of the *Luz Brasileira*, discussed Pedro’s role as the founder of the nation in a way representative of most conservative editors. In his 1829 discussion of Pedro’s birthday, the editor wrote “it is to this day that is owed the

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<sup>39</sup>*Moderador*, 13 October 1830, #43.

<sup>40</sup>Eduardo da Silva, *Prince of the People: The Life and Times of a Brazilian Free Man of Colour*, Moyra Ashford, trans., (London: Verso, 1993), 72. For more information on *beija-mãos* see Schultz, *Tropical Versailles*, 156; Walsh, *Notices of Brazil*, I, 285; Souza, *Patria Coroad*, 235-236; and the classic, if disparaging, image of “Court Day at Rio” in A.P.D.G., *Sketches of Portuguese Life, Manners, Costume, and Character*, (London: George B. Whitaker, 1826).

<sup>41</sup>Walsh reported: “there is one tribunal to which people have access and that is the throne of the Emperor himself. On every Saturday morning, a public levee is held where the humbledst individual in society may in person claim redress.” Walsh, *Notices of Brazil*, I, 268.

foundation of our Empire and the extermination of the infamous absolutist government; it is on this day that Nature presented he who would be today the object of our love and fidelity.”<sup>42</sup> This passage is revealing for several reasons. First, the editor clearly separated Pedro from the earlier rule of the Portuguese monarchs. He implied that Pedro’s father and grandmother before him were absolute monarchs who did not have the wishes of the people in mind. Second, the editor wrote that “Nature” gave Pedro to the people. This otherworldly reference provided an extra element of legitimacy to Pedro’s rule. It was sanctioned by a power greater than the mundane laws of humankind. The editor of the *Verdadeiro Patriota* used a similar technique when he referred to Pedro as the “Entity to whom all obligations are owed.”<sup>43</sup>

Beyond relating their own opinions of the importance of Pedro to the Empire of Brazil, conservative editors described in detail the state’s efforts to control the meaning of civic rituals. One serious problem facing early imperial Brazil was convincing the rest of the provinces in the sprawling country that they all belonged to the same nation-state.<sup>44</sup> To highlight the unity of the nation and help legitimate Pedro’s position as emperor, an elaborate monument was created in the Praça da Constituição to celebrate Pedro’s birthday on 12 October 1830. When challenged by increasing dissent and questions about his legitimacy, Pedro turned to the visible display of stability that recalled the acclamation of his father. For João’s acclamation in 1818, members of the French Artistic Mission were commissioned by the commercial organization of the city, as well as the senate, to build monuments to the

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<sup>42</sup>*Luz Brasileira*, 13 October 1829, #10.

<sup>43</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 13 October 1830, #4.

<sup>44</sup>For our purposes, a nation-state is defined as a “populations bound by ties of politically delimited territory, of allegiance to identical sovereigns, and of membership in a common political culture.” Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations*, 139.

grandness of the king and the importance of the day. Auguste Taunay, Jean Baptiste Debret, and Grand-Jean de Montigny designed a trio of monuments: an Egyptian obelisk, a Greek temple dedicated to Minerva, and a Roman Triumphal arch. The monuments all contained images dealing with the greatness of the monarch, including “statues of History and Poetry, personifying the narratives that perpetuated the royal acts,” on the pedestals outside of Minerva’s temple.<sup>45</sup> The message sent by these statues may have had different meanings for the different classes of people, but the overwhelming idea of grandness and stability was unmistakable. Surrounding himself with ancient ruling images, the king drew on established traditions to establish his own.<sup>46</sup>

Conservative editors advanced the effort of the state to indoctrinate the public by spending a considerable number of pages describing the monuments built to praise Pedro in 1830. From the editors’ reporting we learn much about the physical structure of the display. In the center of the monument, on top of eight Doric columns, the imperial crest was prominently displayed. Around and above that was a gallery where people could congregate to admire the symbolic representation of the Prince. The gallery was formed by twenty-four Doric columns. Spanning the columns were medallions, including six “that served as the principle entrances, portraying the memorable events of Brazil’s Independence,” which, of course, revolved around Pedro.<sup>47</sup> In a sort of political stations of the cross, the short history of Brazil was displayed in a visual format for the mostly illiterate nation. The state reinforced its foundational myths in symbolic, visual language. The other eighteen

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<sup>45</sup> Souza, *Patria Coroadá*, 286.

<sup>46</sup>Gonçalves dos Santos, *Memórias para Servir*, II, 616-649.

<sup>47</sup>*Moderador*, 16 October 1830, #44.

medallions pictured the eighteen provinces that made up the nation of Brazil, with images of their primary products.<sup>48</sup> The history of Brazil, as told through the acts of the young emperor, was tied intrinsically and symbolically to the provinces of the empire. The state used imagery to educate the onlookers about a particular interpretation and the conservative newspapers completed this process by directing their discussion toward a reinforcement of the intended messages of the state.

Several key points emerge from an analysis of conservative reporting of 12 October celebrations. First, conservatives believed Pedro was wholly responsible for the foundation of Brazil. Without the acts of Pedro, Brazil would not have won its independence. Consequently, the civic rituals most deserving of remembering and celebrating were those that revolved around the person of Pedro. Second, physical monuments erected to celebrate a particular interpretation acted as pedagogical tools. Conservative editors relayed in great detail, and without critique, the message of the state, thereby reinforcing the official version of events.

### *7 September*

7 September celebrations commemorated the day Pedro supposedly shouted “Independence or Death” on the banks of the Ipiranga river in 1822. For most of the nineteenth century, 7 September was considered Brazil’s independence day. While the conservatives easily made the claim that this day celebrated the acts of Pedro in liberating the

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<sup>48</sup>For accounts of the monument, see *Brasileiro Imparcial*, 12 October, 1830 #83; *Moderador*, 13 October 1830, #43; and *Verdadeiro Patriota*, 13 October 1830, #4.

colony of Brazil, liberal editors used the 7 September celebrations to claim a larger role for the people in the foundation and perpetuation of the state by reinterpreting the origin of the celebration.

According to the *Nova Luz Brasileira*, 7 September was “the only day that is truly of the people.” The editor was adamantly opposed to the conservative view that Pedro I acted independent of the people in establishing the nation of Brazil. Instead, the editor celebrated Brazil for its natural bounty, and even sounded the nativist note that “on the cadavers of twenty million Americans assassinated by Europeans, we judge ourselves free and independent forever.” While this view presents an interesting precursor to the Indigenismo movement of the late nineteenth century, the author’s point was to celebrate the differences between Brazil and Portugal. The author praised the Brazilian rivers of the Prata and the Amazon, and wrote that the residents of Brazil had no connection to the Portuguese rivers Tejo, Rheno, Doiro, Minho, and Guadiana. Instead of celebrating the fact that a Portuguese ruler overthrew the mantle of Old World government in favor of a New World experiment, the author pointed out that Brazil was independent *even though* it was led by a Portuguese ruler.<sup>49</sup>

The issue of the role of the people in the founding of the state runs throughout the *Aurora Fluminense*’s 1830 discussion of 7 September festivities. The editor began with a general observation on the importance of the day: “The first day of a people is always that which begins their existence as a Nation, separate and independent from any other.” This brief opening line contains many significant ideas. First, the nation is comprised of a people, *o povo*, not just an emperor and his subjects. Second, the idea of being independent and

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<sup>49</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 7 September 1830, #75.

separate from any other country was probably directed toward Pedro's lingering connections to the mother country. Even though he had abdicated the Portuguese throne four years before—in favor of his daughter—Pedro continued to remain interested in Portuguese affairs, to the point of harboring Portuguese political refugees and (supposedly) helping to raise an army to protect his daughter's interests. The opposition newspapers constantly urged Pedro to remain true to his adopted country and leave behind any connection to Portugal.

### *25 March*

25 March celebrated the day that Pedro signed into law the constitution. While this may seem an obvious day for the people to celebrate their autonomy in the nation, or at least their contribution to or protection from the nation, there is a curious fact about the constitution that needs to be recalled. While in theory the constitution was a document of and for the people, Pedro ensured that the people played only a passive role in its construction and adoption. Frustrated with dissent in the constitutional assembly of 1823, Pedro dissolved the body of duly-elected representatives and drafted a constitution “twice as liberal,” or so he claimed, as any that would have been devised by the representatives of the nation.<sup>50</sup>

The complicated origins of 25 March play out in the later celebrations of it and in the way the meaning of the celebration was contested in the press. While, in practice, it was a day that celebrated the actions of the emperor, in theory it celebrated the role of the people in

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<sup>50</sup>Macaulay, *Dom Pedro*, 157.



deciding the direction of the political course of the young empire. For liberal newspaper editors, 25 March was a day of particular importance. The constitution provided the liberty of the press without which there would have been no opposition presses. Since the writer “does not refuse to mark with a firm hand the choices that may wreck the government, indicate the evils that afflict the Patria, and remind the men of power” of their duties, the constitution was a valuable document indeed.<sup>51</sup>

In its 1829 discussion of 25 March, the *Aurora Fluminense* discussed in detail the importance of the people. “The Monarch,” the editor began, “that the People had chosen, did not hesitate to offer for the approval of the Brazilians a liberal code.” The editor here acknowledged that Pedro had an originating role in the constitution, but ultimately, it was *offered* by Pedro and *accepted* by the people. This assumes that the people had a choice in the matter and therefore played a significant role in its adoption. The editor continued to say that “Brazil embraced this code with enthusiasm; the Nation put the stamp of its supreme sanction on it.” Hence, without the “stamp of supreme sanction” from the nation, the constitution would not have been passed.<sup>52</sup> The 1830 edition continued with the same idea as expressed a year earlier. When the editor did discuss the emperor, he put him in an almost subservient role. Pedro, “born of the ancient line of Kings, did not hesitate to offer [the constitution] to the sanction of the people, knowing that only this title [constitutional monarch] would be able to imprint the stamp of genuine legitimacy.”<sup>53</sup> Hence, the emperor did offer the people a constitution, just as the conservative editors would argue. However,

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<sup>51</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 27 March 1829, #170.

<sup>52</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 27 March 1829, #170.

<sup>53</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 31 March 1830, #319.

for the liberals, this offering needed to be accepted by the people—they had the last word on the issue. By rhetorically endowing the people with political agency, the liberal editor of the *Aurora Fluminense* encouraged the people to act on this newly-formulated power, which they soon did.

The differences between the conservative and liberal interpretations of Brazil's foundational rituals are found in the competing conceptions of the role of the people. The conservatives downplayed the role of the people and focused their discussion on the actions and person of Pedro. Liberals argued for the centrality of the people to the foundation of the state. Rituals provided editors on both sides the opportunity to re-examine the principles on which the state stood. The liberals challenged the official interpretation of the rituals, thereby putting into the question the legitimacy of the state.

### ***Putting the People in their Place***

While editors used rituals to ground their theoretical discussions in a more concrete framework, it remains to be seen how the competing interpretations played out in the celebrations themselves. Just as editors battled over the role of the people in the origins of the state's foundational rituals, they also battled over the role of the people in the celebration of the rituals. Editors competed for control of the public by placing the people as either passive onlookers who witnessed the greatness of the emperor or active participants in the contemporary celebrations.

Conservative editors used nameless and faceless crowds to support their portrayal of the popularity of Pedro. When the conservatives placed Pedro as the most important of all the political institutions, they reduced the role of the people to a passive group. For Pedro's representative style of governing to work, there needed to be a public to view him and his actions. He needed spectators. However, these spectators could not act on their own; rather, they could only watch and approve by their very presence. In this way, the monument erected to display the grandeur of Pedro functioned somewhat as had the gallows the monument temporarily replaced. As Foucault relates, "in the ceremonies of the public execution, the main character was the people, whose real and immediate presence was required for the performance."<sup>54</sup> For an execution to have the desired effect, it had to be public and well attended. Likewise, the official celebration of an accepted interpretation of a civic ritual needed a public to witness the event. Editors completed the process by expounding on the docile nature of that public to comment on the immense popularity of the state.

One example of how the conservative editors reduced the role of the people to that of witnesses was the way they controlled space. The location for the monument to celebrate Pedro's birthday is curious; it was placed in the Praça da Constituição, also called the Rocio. The placement of the monument in the Rocio was anomalous because the square was considered a 'popular' location, or one that traditionally saw the mundane episodes of urban daily life. Weeks earlier, a subscription was taken up among the wealthy commercial houses of the city to erect the monument to honor the emperor.<sup>55</sup> The wealthy members of Rio

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<sup>54</sup>Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, (NY: Vintage, 1979), 57.

<sup>55</sup>*Moderador*, 13 October 1830, #43.

society honored Pedro in their style, but in a place that challenged the viewers with an unfamiliar spectacle. The fact that the official display of this monument was held there, and not in the Campo de Santanna or in the palace square, hints toward spatial control.

Conservative editors jumped on this occasion to emphasize the presence of a supportive, but docile, public that gathered to witness the grandeur of Pedro's government. Essentially, the conservative editors used the placement of the monument to honor Pedro as a weapon in the battle for discursive control of First Empire rituals.<sup>56</sup>

The differentiation of social space allows us to read political meaning that we might otherwise not see. While it may be spurious to locate groups within neat urban boundaries,

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<sup>56</sup>Space as an element of urban social history has garnered increasing attention from historians. The most common interpretation is that the public areas of the city represent a "'stage' for various activities involved with everyday life and recreation and even political protests, reflecting 'social drama.'" Wang, "Street Culture," 49. An important element to this public stage for the acting out of societal dramas is the issue of control. By looking at 'ideal' urban plans, increased state vigilance of public areas, and the "political and symbolic meaning" of certain spatial areas of cities, a contested terrain of personal interaction with the state emerges. Mary Kay Vaughn, "Cultural Approaches to Peasant Politics in the Mexican Revolution," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 79 no. 2, (May 1999), 275; Mauricio Tenorio Trillo, "1910 Mexico City: Space and Nation in the City of the Centenario," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 28 no. 1, (February 1996); Thomas H. Holloway, *Policing Rio de Janeiro: Repression and Resistance in a 19<sup>th</sup>-Century City*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993). If "space is understood to be socially constituted and socially constituting," the contestation of that social meaning not only shows us the way that the urban areas were constructed but also what elements of it were up for debate. Mary Kay Vaughn, "Cultural Approaches" 277. Brazilianists have come to see the city, and especially Rio de Janeiro, as providing fertile ground for an investigation of how the control of urban areas was a key part of the political agenda of the state and the interaction of the people with the state. Most recent works have focused on the urban strife of the transition from Empire to Republic (1889), and subsequent urban spatial reorganization at the turn of the century (1890-1904). June Hahner, "Jacobins and Galegos: Urban Radicals Versus Portuguese Immigrants in Rio de Janeiro in the 1890s," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 18, no. 2, (May 1976). Jeffrey D. Needell, "The *Revolta Contra Vacina* of 1904: The Revolt Against 'Modernization' in Belle-Epoque Rio de Janeiro," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 67 no. 2, (1987). Teresa Meade, "'Living Worse and Costing More': Resistance and Riot in Rio de Janeiro, 1890-1917," Sandra Lauderdale Graham, "The Vintem Riot and Political Culture: Rio de Janeiro, 1880," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 60 no. 3 (August 1980), and *House and Street*. For other areas of Latin America, see David Sowell, "Political Impulses: Political Participation in Formal and Informal Politics, Bogotá, Colombia," *Cities of Hope: People, Protests, and Progress in Urbanizing Latin America, 1870-1930*, Ronn Pineo and James A. Baer eds., (Boulder: Westview, 1998). Increasingly, the Kingdom and First Empire are beginning to attract the attention of a growing number of scholars interested in the spatial displays of power and attempts at control. Souza, "D. Pedro I e a Praça Pública"; Schultz, *Tropical Versailles*, especially chap. 4: "The New City of Rio de Janeiro: Reconstructing the Portuguese Royal Court"; Sonia Gomes Pereira, "O Rio de Janeiro na Primeira Metade do Século XIX," *Anais Museu Histórico Nacional*, 30, (1998); Gladys Sabina Ribeiro, *A Liberdade em Construção: Identidade Nacional e Conflitos Antilusitanos no Primeiro Reinado*, (Rio: Relume Dumará, 2002).

we can locate their separate festivals in different areas of the city. This is important because the various groups used space to help define their group, even if that definition existed only as a conception of what they were not. The Rocio was a common meeting place of Old Rio almost since the city's inception. The weekly market was held there and on any given day it was full of people of all races and legal status in Rio de Janeiro. While it did not have a public fountain like the Largo do Carioca or the Campo de Santanna, large numbers of slaves congregated in the Rocio selling wares, waiting for employment as slaves for hire, or participating in their own social theater. During the colonial era, the Rocio was the location for the crowning of the *Rei Balthasar*, when Africans in Brazil elected their own king and queen.<sup>57</sup> Africans were not the only ones to frequent the square. The Rocio traditionally was populated by large numbers of Gypsies, as evidenced by one of the main streets that exited off the square: rua dos Ciganos [Gypsies]. Present throughout Brazil, Gypsies most often entered the public record when more sedentary residents complained about the large groups of people living out of doors or the bands of Gypsy men who allegedly roamed the streets at night. The *Aurora Fluminense* reported in 1829 that a "public attack made at one in the afternoon by twenty or more Ciganos armed with sticks and knives has produced a general commotion among the people."<sup>58</sup> The editor ended his passage with a plea to the government to change the vagrancy laws to include all those whose primary residence was out of doors. The editor may have had a personal reason for his rhetorical attack against the Gypsies since the Rocio was also a common meeting place for the liberal elite of Rio de Janeiro. Brasil

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<sup>57</sup>Vivaldo Coarcy, *Memórias da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro*, (São Paulo: Editoria da Universidade de São Paulo, 1988), 76.

<sup>58</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 4 March 1829, #161. Not all gypsies were itinerant, however. Rios Filho reports that many were wealthy traders and slave merchants. A certain Rabelo, known as the "gypsy king," had a large home on the Campo de Santanna. Adolfo Morales de los Rios Filho, *O Rio de Janeiro Imperial*, (Rio: Topbooks, 2000), 7, 70.

Gerson reports that one was likely to find Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga conversing in the pharmacy of Juvencio, on the corner of the Travessa da Barreira in the Rocio.<sup>59</sup>

Just as newspapers were split down ideological lines, the city was divided into an official zone and a popular one. It was unnecessary to denote which groups of people were in attendance at which public event; the readers could draw their own conclusions by simply reading the names of the venue. If an editor mentioned that there was a military parade in the Campo de Santanna followed by a presentation in the opera house, readers would not fail to understand that the editor was discussing an official celebration made up of Pedro's closest supporters. A common official celebration, for instance Pedro's birthday in 1830, would start in the Campo de Santanna for a military parade. The Campo held the military barracks and constituted the main military parade ground. Later in the First Empire, as the state began to lose control of the military, this would become a hotly contested square of land, but for the majority of Pedro's reign it could safely be considered an official area for festival days. After reviewing the troops, a normal ritual would then see Pedro and his family ride through the main downtown streets toward the palace on the banks of Guanabara Bay. To get from the Campo de Santanna to the palace, the royal entourage would pass through what was known as the *Cidadela*. This area of the city, consisting of the streets Quitanda, Direita, Violas, Rosário, e Ourives, was densely packed with commercial shops on the first floor, the owners living above.<sup>60</sup> It was considered the economic district and was populated mostly with Portuguese clerks and British shipping agents. The national lines were so clearly drawn here that this area would later become the site of the Brazilian-Portuguese riots of March

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<sup>59</sup>Brasil Gerson, *História das Ruas do Rio*, (Rio: Editoria Nova Aguilar, 2000), 116.

<sup>60</sup>Souza, "Praça Publica," 50; see also Ribeiro, *A Liberdade em Construção* for a detailed description of the *Cidadela*.

1831. Finally, the emperor and his family would return to the palace for a *beija-mão* and presentation of his royal person on the balcony of the palace. Usually, the royal family would then cross the rua Direita in front of the palace and enter the imperial chapel for a *Te-Deum* mass. Sometimes Pedro would end the ritual celebration by attending a play or opera in the theatre. Located on the Praça da Constituição, the theater was one of the areas where the wealthy citizens of Rio or visiting dignitaries could be assured of finding Pedro, or at least his portrait, watching a patriotic presentation. As Walsh wrote, the emperor was “passionately fond” of such events.<sup>61</sup>

While the theater, an official area of the city, faced the Rocio, the square constituted an area of concern for the state—an area that needed to be controlled. During festival celebrations in the square it was common for the military to gather at the four exits and mingle in the crowd in an attempt to enforce social control. “Such proceedings,” reports Iara Lis Carvalho Souza, “brought security to the government and a certain vigilance over the population.”<sup>62</sup> The state reinforced its control over the Rocio by holding public executions in the square. In many ways, the gallows and the theater exemplify the conflicting uses of the square. Public executions can be interpreted as theatre for the masses—a place for commoners to meet—while the official theater provided a common meeting place for the city’s elite. While holding public executions in a common meeting area may seem incongruous, they were held there for that very reason. The court used the public nature of

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<sup>61</sup>Walsh, *Notices of Brazil*, I, 266. For a discussion of the portrait of Pedro standing in for the man, see Souza, *Patria Coroada*; see also Schultz, *Tropical Versailles*, 155.

<sup>62</sup>Souza, *Patria Coroada*, 234.

the square to reaffirm its power and legitimacy through a public show of force against those who disobeyed it.<sup>63</sup>

The conflicting uses of the square add weight to the idea that the conservative editors tried to control the festivals by imposing the state's interpretation of 12 October on the people. Since the Rocio was more commonly used for unofficial gatherings and the daily goings-on of the common people, it is all the more interesting that *all* the conservative editors in 1830 discussed in detail, usually over several editions, the monument to celebrate Pedro's birthday placed in the Rocio. Their reporting of the festival in any detail was certainly anomalous; the fact that it was emphasized to such a degree—the *Moderador* spent three editions on it, the *Brasileiro Imparcial* four, and the *Verdadeiro Patriota* one four-page edition—can only lead us to the conclusion that the editors wanted to make a clear point about support from groups who controlled this key area of the city. As mentioned before, rarely did newspaper editors discuss the particulars of a given ritual celebration. When they did, it was usually to emphasize a point or present a counter-interpretation to an accepted issue. Space was used in the newspapers to argue for the presence or absence of the people in the celebration of state rituals and also to differentiate the locales of the official and unofficial celebrations. Conservative editors dwelled on the state celebrations in areas of the city traditionally considered the domain of the people to show the involvement of the masses in the plans of the state.

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<sup>63</sup> According to Michel Foucault, "public execution is to be understood not only as a judicial, but also as a political ritual." Holding executions in a public square reinforced the power of the state by displaying its control at the most base and obvious level. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 47. It is interesting to note that Tiradentes was executed in this square. Even though for the entirety of the Empire Tiradentes was not celebrated as a martyr for the nation, the positivists of the First Republic saw in him an obvious candidate for national sainthood. The cult of Tiradentes was created and he was celebrated as a man of the common people who heralded the independence of the nation. By renaming the Rocio Praça Tiradentes, the Positivists were reinforcing the idea that the square belonged to the people. While not yet lauded the hero of independence he would become later on, it is interesting to note that the man who would later be considered a popular hero met his end in the 'people's' space. Vivaldo Coaracy, *Memórias da Cidade*, 81-82.



The conservative editors did not merely list the dimensions and number of lights on the monument; they spent paragraphs describing the passive and appreciative public in their discussions. When the “magnificent illumination constructed in the middle of the Praça da Constituição” was lit, “between the columns an innumerable concourse of people of all ages, conditions, and states passed to see this illumination; they illuminated their houses and all breathed praise in this happy day that celebrated the Birth of the best of monarchs.”<sup>64</sup> Not only did the people pass through or by the monument, they also did not disturb the solemn, celebratory attitude of the day. “The thing most worthy of note,” according to the *Brasileiro Imparcial*, “was that there was not the least disturbance; a cordial happiness was observed in all the attendants.” It was right and just that the people should be happy about the birthday of the emperor because “from His Liberal Hand we received the code of our liberties.” “The good Brazilians who, from the bottom of hearts, love their patria and desire to see it prosper, are intimately convinced of this truth,” the editor continued.<sup>65</sup> The conservative press discursively controlled the people by including them in their discussions as passive onlookers participating in the mechanisms of state.

Instead of downplaying the role of the people and placing them as silent witnesses to the greatness of Pedro, liberal editors constantly tried to show that the people were active participants who were essential to the continued stability of the state. The *Aurora Fluminense* discussed in detail the activities of the people in the celebration of 7 September. The day that “tied a Nation to a Prince” was celebrated with sacred hymns and homilies in the churches of São Francisco de Paula, Candelaria, and Santa Rita. The celebrations were

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<sup>64</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 13 October 1830, #4.

<sup>65</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 16 October 1830, #84.

not confined to the churches, however. The entire town was illuminated and a grand gathering of people in the Rocío stayed from sunset to sunrise of the next day listening to poems and shouting Vivas to “Our Independence, the Constitution, the Brazilian Nation, the Constitutional Emperor, and the Assembly of Brazil.”<sup>66</sup> The *Aurora Fluminense*’s discussion of 25 March 1830 followed a similar vein in its relation of the activity of the Rio de Janeiro citizens in the celebration:

The people of Rio de Janeiro wanted to celebrate the anniversary of a day so great to all the Brazilians, and after the official celebration, the houses of the citizens, with rare exceptions, were spontaneously illuminated; bands of music, distributed throughout the different parishes, ran all the night through the streets, accompanied by an immense concourse of persons clothed, generally, with decency who sang different patriotic hymns between repeated vivas given to the objects of our political cult. In the majority of streets these acts were accompanied from the windows by men and women waving white handkerchiefs, in some places tossing flowers.<sup>67</sup>

This passage places the demonstrations of the people foremost in its discussion. They were not passive onlookers; rather, they were the driving force behind the celebration.

In their discussion of 7 September, conservative editors continued to portray the public as passive onlookers. The editor of the *Moderador* went out of his way to include the people in his discussion of the celebration, but only in a passive way. During the celebration, he wrote, the “major security, the most cordial fraternity reigned from all the time of the festival, nor was it expected that citizens so full of the grand object that the day brought to memory, would detach themselves from the rules of decency that forms the character of Independent Brazilians.” The editor placed the people in a docile, safe, and harmless position. He created for them a place in the ceremony, but they did not act. While the glory

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<sup>66</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 10 September 1830, #385.

<sup>67</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 29 March 1830, #318.

and responsibility for the joyous national holiday fell to Pedro alone, the day would not be complete without groups of well wishers witnessing the official parades and dutifully acting as a public. In an interesting exposé of class difference, the *Verdadeiro Patriota* reported that crowds had gathered in the Rocio to watch Pedro enter the theater. Once he entered, members of the elite who had managed to acquire a ticket for the performance “erupted in the most fervent *Vivas*; reciting different pieces of poetry.”<sup>68</sup> The faceless and potentially disruptive public only witnessed, while the safer theater-going crowd acted. For the *Verdadeiro Patriota*, the people should have been grateful for the limited role that they had. In a reference often associated with the conservative rendering of the 25 March rituals, the editor continued on to discuss how “from his Liberal hand we received the code of our liberties.”<sup>69</sup> All was owed to the one person who freed the nation.

The conservative newspapers were overwhelmingly concerned with social control and control over the public festivals. Since Pedro’s representational style of government needed an observing public, the danger was that the people could co-opt the ritual for their own ends. An active public opened the door to dissention and competed with the state-sponsored image of a protector-king responsible for the needs of the people. To maintain the aura of passive obedience, the conservative editors railed against any possible deviation from the officially-sponsored celebrations and equated any display of enthusiasm not sanctioned by the state to be ‘un-Brazilian.’ The *Brasileiro Imparcial* began its reporting of the 7 September 1830 with: “today is the anniversary of our Independence: on this day Brazil appeared brilliant among nations.” This seemingly innocuous beginning was followed with:

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<sup>68</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 13 October 1830, #4

<sup>69</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 13 October 1830, #4.

“we have confidence that [the celebration] will not be disturbed by indiscreet radicals who excite passions and animosities. Moderation and prudence, which characterize a civilized people, will preside over these celebrations.”<sup>70</sup> Here the editor implied that if the people did not act in a way prescribed by the state, with “moderation and prudence,” then they were not worthy of the independence granted to them by the monarch.

Liberal editors, on the other hand, courted and promoted an active public to counter what they saw as Pedro’s absolutist tendencies and lingering attachment to the affairs of Portugal. The conservatives should relax, believed the *Nova Luz*, and let the people celebrate their holidays in the boisterous and happy way with which they were accustomed. The problem was that “the *Imparcial* sees blood on the moon; everything that happens scares him.” “But,” the editor continued, “what bad can happen if an enthusiastic Citizen gives Vivas to whatever he wants?”<sup>71</sup> In keeping with their conception of New World political forms outlined in an earlier chapter, liberal editors used every opportunity to highlight the role of the people in both the origins of civic rituals and the contemporary celebrations. Conservative editors also used the public, but in a very different way. They emphasized the existence of the public at civic events, particularly those attended by the emperor, to argue for Pedro’s popularity, but the public remained at arm’s length. It was a sanitized public; one that had no role in political affairs except as a silent witness. Conservatives feared losing control over the public and used their reporting of civic rituals to help keep the public in line.

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<sup>70</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 7 September 1830, #73.

<sup>71</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 30 April 1830, #41.

*The Battle for Control of the  
Passive Public*

The perceived need for controlling the public became much more pressing in 1830. By 1830, the reigns of power began to slip from the hands of Pedro and the conservatives. Increased agitation in the provinces, continued disputes over Pedro's lingering connection to Portugal, and a severe economic downturn all contributed to discontent on the streets of Rio de Janeiro. This discontent is noticeable in the way the newspapers reported the celebrations of Rio's civic holidays. Tensions were high, and rhetoric was closely watched for any sign of a verbal slight.

For its discussion of 25 March 1830, the conservative *Brasileiro Imparcial* began with a formulaic description of events: "25 March was celebrated in this court with all the pomp and grand jubilee of its inhabitants: after His Majesty gave a beija-mão, and after the Troops held a great Parade in the Campo de Santanna, the houses at night were illuminated spontaneously, without order from the authorities." "Later," the editor continued, "groups of people ranged through the streets until high noon, shouting vivas and reciting printed verses, analogies of the day, to better show their enthusiasm." From this point, however, things began to get out of control:

Exaltados, or anarchists, shouted vivas with criminal intent; to Liberty (for example) in a country where, unfortunately, slavery exists, where they might excite a new Spartacus to imitate ancient Rome or Haiti. At the same time, citizens whose houses were not lit up were insulted. Should the government, in the midst of the agitation in which is found spirits, permit such nocturnal reunions? Should not its primary concern be to avoid the occasions in which a crime could be committed, in order to avoid having to punish those [responsible] later?

The editor ended his diatribe on a warning note: “These radicals will never force, nor form, public opinion.”<sup>72</sup>

Given the importance placed on 25 March by the liberal press, it is no surprise that the negative commentary concerning roving groups of revelers in the *Brasileiro Imparcial* elicited heated responses. The *Aurora Fluminense* and the *Nova Luz Brasileira* spent the better part of a month examining in detail the *Brasileiro Imparcial*’s report and re-interpreting the celebration. They both knew that they were acting out of character by dwelling on the discussion of this ritual. “There are some who will say that we give too much importance to a poor article in the *Imparcial*; but we respond to it as to an organ of a faction whose force is composed of the major part of deluded men, who do not know what they did, but who did a great evil all the same.”<sup>73</sup> Both liberal editors shared the idea that there was a greater guiding force or a party behind the depredations of the *Imparcial*. The *Aurora* began by stating “our *Imparcial*, who is not Brazilian, could not better reveal his true intentions, or the plans of those who order him to write, than in the article published last Saturday about the celebration of 25 March.” “Ignorance is not enough,” believed the *Aurora*. “It takes much malevolence from a certain party to turn odious the solemnity of the anniversary of the Brazilian Constitution.”<sup>74</sup> The *Nova Luz* believed that the *Imparcial* did not “err from ignorance” in his labeling the celebrants anarchists; rather he erred “from wickedness” because he was paid to write—“not [by] the Ministry, but [by] the disorganizing absolutist faction.”<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 27 March 1830, #25.

<sup>73</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 31 March 1830, #319.

<sup>74</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 31 March 1830, #319.

<sup>75</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 30 April 1830, #41.

The main point of contention was that the *Imparcial* criticized the liberals for celebrating a holiday important to them. The liberal editors turned the conservative editor's criticism back on him and labeled him the one that threatened the peace and acted outside the norms of social celebration. "The *Imparcial* is dangerous with his newspaper," wrote the *Nova Luz*. "He is subversive and seditious."<sup>76</sup> Why was it dangerous to shout for liberty, the liberal editors wondered. At the same time that many were shouting for liberty, others "saluted the Constitutional Emperor, the Assembly, the Constitution." "Were they not the same thing?" asked the *Aurora*, "namely, legal liberty part of which we possess in reality, and part in promise."<sup>77</sup> If the "*Imparcial* labels those who applaud with enthusiasm the Day of the signing of our Constitution as anarchists," the editor of the *Nova Luz Brasileira* wrote, "then that is proof that he is an absolutist and writes at the wish of those he serves."<sup>78</sup> Ultimately, the debate fell to the question of who should be able to celebrate what. The unofficial celebration was outside the control of the state and the conservative press labeled it seditious and dangerous. The *Aurora Fluminense* wrote determinedly: "it is impossible to love order, as well as justice, without valuing always the symbol of alliance that assures Brazil legal liberty and the possession of rights, for which people still fight. He who thinks otherwise is not only a slave but crazy as well."<sup>79</sup> The liberals defended the role of the people in celebrating the political rituals because "a people always silent and uniformly sad and speechless is composed of slaves."<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 30 April 1830, #41.

<sup>77</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 31 March 1830, #319.

<sup>78</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 30 April 1830, #41.

<sup>79</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 22 March 1830, #315.

<sup>80</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 30 April 1830, #41.

This episode proved to be a defining moment in the relationship between the liberal and conservative editors and between the liberal editors and the state. From this moment, the press was full of recriminations, accusations, and heated defenses of action by both the people and the state. The liberal editors reported that the people were now much more wary of any effort by the state to curtail their rights and that since 25 March “we have seen many Citizens who wear in their hats the Brazilian band (green and yellow), or the National band, that signifies that we are independent and free, members of a Sovereign and Constitutional Nation.” What was an obligation for some was a divisive and defiant symbol of protest to others. The stakes were irrevocably raised, since “the band indicates patriotism, loyalty, Constitutionality, and the deliberation of defending Brazil as your true and only country, even if it means sacrificing your life.”<sup>81</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

As Pedro left the church of São Francisco de Paula on 25 March 1831 one audacious reveler accosted him and asked whether he intended to adhere to the precepts of the constitution. Taken off guard by such a brazen question, the emperor responded, “Certainly, I never had any other intention.” “In that case,” responded the speaker, “you can count on our love and fidelity.”<sup>82</sup> This vignette provides the key to understanding what was up for debate and how the two sides viewed their positions. The main difference between the rhetoric of the conservative and opposition editors is the role of the people. For

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<sup>81</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 16 April 1830, #37.

<sup>82</sup>Tobias Monteiro, *História do Império*, vol. II, 199; For a self-serving account of the day, including a foiled regicide, see Antonio Borgês da Fonseca, *Manifesto Politico, Apontamentos de Minha Vida Politica e da Vida Politica do Dr. Urbano Sabino Pessoa de Melo*, (Recife: Typ. Commercial de G. H. de Mira, 1867), n/p.



the conservatives, Pedro embodied the nation and he was responsible for its existence and its perpetuation. Pedro chose to honor the people with his presence, his actions, and his words. He gave Brazil independence and a constitution, and his continued presence and interest in the nation ensured its perpetuation, prosperity, and security. Conservative editors helped disseminate the message of the state and evoked a safe, passive public to witness the grandness and stability of the state. For the liberals, the people had chosen Pedro to be their emperor and he had to meet their expectations in order to continue his rule. Liberal editors called on the people to act and defend the hard-won liberties of the constitutional empire. While conservative editors included the people in their discussion of civic rituals as passive onlookers witnessing the grandness of the celebration, liberal editors placed the people squarely in the middle of both the foundation and perpetuation of the state. Pedro gave them a constitution, but the people chose to accept it. His actions led to independence, but he was acclaimed by the people. Without the actions of the people, the state would not be legitimate. Hence, the legitimacy of the nation rested on the will of the people.

This discussion is all the more important because of the fragile foundation of the Brazilian nation-state. The legitimacy of the state was based on the foundational rituals of Pedro's actions and person. But what would happen when the people and the state disagreed on the meaning of those rituals? What would happen when a hitherto silent populace decided to question the legitimacy of the monarch? Then the entire basis for the legitimacy of the nation would be at risk. The newspaper editors, by reinterpreting the meaning of the official state rituals, offered an alternate version of the founding and perpetuation of the state and encouraged the people to act. When Pedro arrived at the church of São Francisco he did not find a docile public on hand to silently witness his rule. Rather, he found a public that was

not afraid to approach him and challenge his style of governing. As we will see in the next chapter, the newly-emboldened public would come to ask a great deal more of Pedro as the last year of the First Empire unfolded.

## CHAPTER V: BUILDING TENSIONS

This chapter details the events in 1830 that presaged the riot of the Nights of the Broken Bottles. By 1830, the liberal newspaper editors had staked out the territory they wanted to defend. They mobilized their resources, their newspapers and audiences, against any suspected intransigence against the key issues of popular sovereignty, freedom of the press, and a protection of rights embodied in the constitution. A series of events in 1830 forced them to take a more active role in opposing the government. Contested political rituals and the specter of absolutism indicated to an increasingly critical editor corps that Pedro's government had abandoned the liberal principles on which the nation was founded. The system they had become so invested in was eroding in front of their eyes; all the positions that the liberal editors had developed over the last three years of Pedro's rule were tested in 1830.

The responses of the liberal editors in 1830 illuminate two facets of First Empire print culture. First, the editors saw themselves as the protectors of the rights of the people. They served as sentinels against any attempted intransigence of the liberal rights discussed in earlier chapters. While earlier in the First Empire editors rhetorically defended principles of popular sovereignty and representative rule, in 1830 the discussion moved beyond theory.

Liberal editors called on their reading and listening publics to take up the sword in defense of those abstract rights.

Second, the events and analyses of 1830 show us the impact news from outside of Rio had on the literate elite in the capital, and, in turn, the effect those writers had on events outside of Rio. Rio newspapers also played a key role in providing foreign news to Brazilians. While an earlier chapter discussed the analysis of European conceptions of monarchy, this chapter will discuss the very real news of the French revolution of 1830 and the parallels observed by the liberal editors. The newspapers of the court city were all the more important because of their role as disseminators of information to the country as a whole. By 1830, three key conservative titles (*Diario do Governo*, *Moderado*, and *Jornal do Comércio*) had a nationwide distribution and many of the more established opposition presses (*Aurora Fluminense*, *Astrea*, *Malagueta*) could boast of subscribers outside of Rio and even further afield than the Southeast of the country. While communication between the capital city and other provinces remained slow throughout the nineteenth century, the newspapers provided the main source of information regarding the nation as a whole.<sup>1</sup> When Pedro traveled outside of the court city he was surprised at times to find that information had traveled from area to area within Brazil. As we will see below, when the liberal editor Libero Badaró was killed in São Paulo in 1830, protests and demonstrations in Rio were expected. However, Pedro seemed genuinely surprised and frustrated when he traveled to Minas Gerais at the end of the year and the topic of Badaró's assassination was equally

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<sup>1</sup>Benedict Anderson sees the role of newspapers as offering people in various areas of the country a unifying principle or image with which they could identify. Reading newspapers made the reader feel part of a whole larger than their immediate surroundings. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 1983), 35.

important to Mineiros.<sup>2</sup> Pedro would later use the nationwide distribution network of the press to voice his response to the increasing criticism against him in the proclamation that sparked the riots of March 1831.

More than in any period before, the opposition editors had a deep impact on public opinion by framing current events in ways that caught readers' attention. They connected seemingly disparate events into a narrative of perceived abuse and potential tragedy that steered political discussion away from merely theoretical debates over the role of the people versus the role of the monarch. The conservatives complained in vain that the "license to write, among an ignorant people, produces the same effect as a dagger carried by an eight-year-old child," while the liberal editors vowed to "censure the hostile path [the government] has followed."<sup>3</sup> The two main competing camps in the print war took their arguments to a new level in 1830. Conciliation and compromise seemed more and more unlikely as 1830 ended and the last year of Pedro's reign began.

### ***Contested Rituals***

The debate that began in March over who should be able to celebrate political rituals and in what manner continued through the rest of the year. As we saw in the previous chapter, conservative editors used their discussion of the commemoration of 25 March to criticize the crowds that disrupted the celebrations of the docile, supportive festival goers.

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<sup>2</sup>Tobias Monteiro, *História do Império: O Primeiro Reinado*, (São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1982), vol. 2, 192; Neill Macaulay, *Dom Pedro: The Struggle for Liberty in Brazil and Portugal, 1798-1834*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986), 245; Iara Lis Carvalho Souza, "1831: D. Pedro I e a Praça Pública," *Anais Museu Histórico Nacional*, 30, (1998), 50.

<sup>3</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 16 August 1830, #65; *Tribuna do Povo*, 29 December 1830, #3.

Liberal editors responded by attacking the conservative editors for limiting the celebrations of the people. If the conservative editors hoped to dampen the celebrations of civic rituals important to the majority of Rio de Janeiro citizens, their discussion of 25 March had the opposite effect. The contested ritual of 25 March led to increased tensions in Rio and in the press, indicating the very real potential of disturbances surrounding the commemorations of 7 September and 12 October.

### *7 September 1830*

As the anniversary of the cry for independence approached, the two sides braced for rhetorical battle. For this celebration, the state played a stronger hand in trying to curb any excesses. Instead of railing against what happened, the state tried to prevent the celebration from getting out of control in the first place. In August, the police superintendent sent a circular around Rio via the newspapers and posted broadsides on church doors limiting the celebration of 7 September to daylight hours and warning people to stay off the streets and especially not to light any bonfires or use fireworks or firearms after dark. In a follow-up declaration, the superintendent of police wrote:

Make it known that soon it will be the epoch of the anniversary of the Happy and Glorious Independence of Brazil, and naturally, the Inhabitants of this City, as good Brazilians, celebrate this day with demonstrations of public rejoicing, in remembrance of the incommensurable benefits that they received from Our August Emperor. Care should be taken that this just display of happiness and contentment does not exceed its limits, and [citizens] are content to practice honest acts, not indiscreet ones; thus making known to Foreigners, who live among us, and to the world at large, that in all occasions [our citizens] know how to moderate their passion, even though excited by such a motive. In case excesses, offering injurious and offensive words to any individual, class, or Nation, are practiced against the Laws and acceptable

practices that put public security at risk, the Police have taken the means necessary for prompt action, arresting the delinquents and remitting them to the Justices [of the Peace] to suffer their deserved punishment.<sup>4</sup>

Without mentioning anything about specific curbs or restrictions on the celebrations, the police superintendent made the case that there was a need for moderation in the celebration of the festival. In an edict that surely did not appease the liberal opposition, the spokesperson of the judicial arm of the state told the Brazilian citizens to calm their excitement so no foreigners would be offended.

It was common for the government to try to control celebrations through a manipulation of local police regulations that decided how and where festivities would be held. Beginning around 1825 an increasing number of edicts from the police appeared.<sup>5</sup> Constant declarations regulating who could be on the streets, bearing what, and in whose company, show that the state believed the street to be a place of contention, or at least threatening to the social order. According to the Reverend Robert Walsh, in February 1830 the police superintendent circulated an edict “declaring that as the sport during the *intruso* [*entrudo*] had been productive of words and blows, it was strictly prohibited in the street and at the theatre as a thing not to be permitted in a ‘civilized society.’”<sup>6</sup> From prohibitions against the public practice of *Entrudo*, to the banning of fireworks on the streets, to limitations on the size of groups in public, the state attempted to impose order and control the streets.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>*Registro de Editais da Polícia* AN Códice 343, 4 September 1830.

<sup>5</sup>Souza, “Praça Publica,” 43.

<sup>6</sup>Rev. R Walsh, *Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829*, (Boston: Richardson et al, 1831), vol. II, 210. Walsh continued with an aside: “But the ‘*sociedade civilizada*’ of Rio paid no respect [to the police].”

<sup>7</sup>For regulations against gatherings of people, especially slaves, see *Registro de Ofícios da Polícia ao Commandante da Real e Depois Imperial Guarda da Polícia*, AN Códice 327, 5 April 1829; for bans on

Even though this latest message from the police superintendent was part of a litany of curbs on the freedom of association, the fact that it attempted to regulate the people's celebration of this particular day made it more important to the liberals. In this particular case, the liberal newspapers hotly protested the edict as a set of controls on the manifestation of their liberty. On "the only day that is truly of the people" the government tried to prevent the Brazilians from celebrating "in the Parks and other public places the always memorable anniversary of the proclamation of our political Independence."<sup>8</sup> Even though a subscription was taken up among the townspeople and a group of citizens petitioned the court for permission to celebrate in the public park, the superintendent tried to "intimidate the citizens, [only ceding] the park for illumination with [the restriction] that it end by nightfall."<sup>9</sup> Since, by definition, an illumination is better seen after nightfall, this was a meager concession on the part of the state.

The *Aurora Fluminense* believed it was un-Brazilian of the superintendent to make such a determination. Indeed, "it appears impossible that a Brazilian authority would respond in such a way to a similar request."<sup>10</sup> Further, the police superintendent "should always respect the object of these festivities, and treat with seriousness the independence of our *patria*, the act that made us a nation." "The demonstrations of jubilation," the editor wrote, "with which the good Fluminenses intended to solemnize their anniversary should be

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fireworks see 21 June 1830, and entrudo: 20 February 1830 and *Registro de Editais da Policia*, AN Códice 343, 16 February 1830. The *Diario do Rio* often reprinted the Editais da Policia: for a ban on fireworks see 6 April 1829, #5; for entrudo see 27 February 1829, #22 and 19 February 1830, #16.

<sup>8</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 7 September 1830, #64.

<sup>9</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 24 August 1830, #71.

<sup>10</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 27 August 1830, #380.



protected by a government that calls itself Constitutional and Brazilian.”<sup>11</sup> The editor steered the discussion toward nationalism, or at least national loyalties. The police superintendent was being non-Brazilian, or anti-Brazilian in his efforts to curtail the festivities. He should have realized that this was a day of the people and, if he truly had the intentions of the people in mind, should have allowed public demonstrations. By making it a matter of nationalism, the *Aurora Fluminense* divided the lines between the anti-Brazilian state, represented by the police superintendent, and the Brazilian people. This clear demarcation between the two sides was indicative of the growing divide between the liberal newspapers and Pedro’s government.

In a similar vein to the discussion of 25 March, the liberal editors believed that higher powers were responsible for placing restrictions on the celebrations. It may have been a conspiracy because “still now we want to believe that he [the police superintendent] was deceived by someone, but in this case it is necessary for him to give a public proof of his recognition of his error.”<sup>12</sup> Exasperated, the *Nova Luz* complained that “there is no one in the world more unhappy than the Brazilian: betrayed by absolutists and recolonizers; by ministers and Jesuit politicians.” Even though they paid for the construction of the public park, “the Brazilian people are not able to make an illumination to celebrate the anniversary of our independence.”<sup>13</sup>

The editor of the *Nova Luz* called on people to ignore the ban, and then afterward discussed how groups of people peacefully celebrated with poems and vivas all night long—

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<sup>11</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 27 August 1830, #380.

<sup>12</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 27 August 1830, #380.

<sup>13</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 24 August 1830, #71.

essentially practicing civil disobedience. “The citizens of Rio de Janeiro have run with great satisfaction,” he reported, “to the open subscription to solemnize the anniversary of what was proclaimed at the Piranga, our Political Independence.” In a celebration of public action, the editor continued “the revolutionaries know that the completion of their evil plans is impossible with all eyes focused down on them.”<sup>14</sup> The editor believed defiance and vigilance were the keys to maintaining what he considered to be hard-won liberties.

Both the *Nova Luz* and the *Aurora* ended their discussion with a warning to the Police Superintendent. The *Aurora*, always treading the middle path, seemed genuinely concerned that edicts like this one could inflame passions between the various segments of the population: “In the position we are in, this circumstance may revive many doubts and produce effects that, for the good of all, neither we, nor the [superintendent], should desire.”<sup>15</sup> The warning of the *Nova Luz* was less conciliatory. The editor asked the police superintendent to look inside himself and see where his loyalties lay. “With more or less victims, Snrs. Ministers and Superintendents,” he wrote, “Brazil will be only for Brazilians.”<sup>16</sup>

This discussion makes the last passage of the conservative *Moderador*’s report of 7 September celebrations all the more important. “The greatest security,” wrote the *Moderador*, “the most cordial fraternity reigned all the time of the festival, nor would it be hoped that citizens so full of the grand object [Pedro’s gift of independence] that the day brought to memory would untie themselves from the rules of decency that formed the

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<sup>14</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 27 August 1830, #72.

<sup>15</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 27 August 1830, #380.

<sup>16</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 24 August 1830, #71.

character of Independent Brazilians.”<sup>17</sup> Public discord and anarchy was the thing most feared by Pedro and his government. By reporting on the harmony and blissful peace of the day, whether it was true or not, conservatives helped to quiet discord and limit the potential for unruly passions.

### *12 October 1830*

By 12 October 1830, the rhetorical battle lines had been drawn. All the conservative editors, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, dedicated copious amounts of space to the discussion of the elaborate celebration to mark Pedro’s birthday. They included detailed descriptions of the monument erected in the Rocio, included the people as passive supporters, and reminded their readers that this day was “unquestionably the most brilliant and majestic of Brazil.”<sup>18</sup>

The *Nova Luz Brasileira* took up the challenge laid down by the organizers of the ceremony and the conservative editors in its expected belligerent style. On this occasion, the editor chose to pointedly ignore all mention of Pedro’s birthday and focus instead on aspects that he could be sure would raise the ire of the conservatives. In his 12 October edition, the editor discussed the severe beating and near death of a slave-for-hire at the hands of his cruel master. He continued to discuss the evils of slavery and then compared chattel slavery to the suffering the Brazilians endure at the hands of their cruel masters—the Portuguese. While

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<sup>17</sup>*Moderador*, 11 September 1830, #34.

<sup>18</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 12 October 1830, #83.

making the caveat that free Brazilians suffered less than slaves, he pointed out that they shared the disgrace of a servile existence.<sup>19</sup>

In the edition immediately following, the editor of the *Nova Luz* chose to include a poem. It was not uncommon to praise Pedro in verses similar to this one printed in the newspapers. With a chorus of “O Hero of our beloved Patria,” the poem sounded in line with many conservative newspapers of the time. A casual reader might have expected that the editor was praising the merits of the emperor, whose birthday was still being discussed in the conservative papers. An experienced reader would hardly think to find that in the *Nova Luz*, however. Indeed, upon closer inspection, the poem lauds the Bahian revolutionary and newspaper editor Cipriano Barata.

Cipriano José Barata de Almeida was a professional revolutionary. A strong believer in the French revolution (he, along with José Bonifácio de Andrada, was studying in Coimbra during the Reign of Terror), Barata professed a deep love for a free and independent Brazil. From 1822 to 1832, Barata spent more time in prison than out of it. He was known for publishing his incendiary journals from wherever he was incarcerated (hence the names: *Sentinella da Liberdade na Guarita de Pernambuco*; *Sentinela da Liberdade à Beira Mar da Praia Grande*; *Sentinella da Liberdade Hoje na Guarita do Quartel General de Pirajá na Bahia de Todos os Santos*, etc.).<sup>20</sup> Barata was part of several revolutionary movements, and was held up as a standard of government criticism by the liberal editors of Rio de Janeiro. A diehard anti-monarchist, Barata’s main target of criticism was Pedro I. This point was well carried in the last stanza of the poem in the *Nova Luz*: “Barata, illustrious hero/The first

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<sup>19</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 12 October 1830, #85.

<sup>20</sup>Nelson Werneck Sodre, *História da Imprensa no Brasil*, (Rio: Civilização Brasileira, 1966), 77-79; see also Marco Morel, *Cipriano Barata na Sentinela da Liberdade*, (Salvador: Academica de Letras da Bahia, 2001).

martyr of the Patria/In the glorious end you will conquer/*The evil traitorous monster*.”<sup>21</sup> At the same time that all the conservative newspapers were full of flowery praise for the emperor, the radical editor of the *Nova Luz* chose instead to honor an incarcerated revolutionary. Surely, the message was not lost on Pedro and his government.

The *Aurora*, usually the opposition newspaper most friendly toward Pedro, did not discuss the commemoration of 12 October at all. While the *Nova Luz Brasileira* discussed the incarceration of the liberal editor, Barata, the *Aurora* chose to introduce a new editor and his journal to the readers of Rio de Janeiro. As we will see below, Antonio Borgês da Fonseca had been until recently a radical editor in Paraíba and Pernambuco. After spending months in jail for his writing, he fell in with a powerful group of opposition landowners who sent him to Rio to be their spokesperson. Soon, his *República* would become the most feared critic of Pedro and his government. Fonseca would come to symbolize the radical opposition, and would become the most popular target for the increasing conservative attacks against the opposition. While it may be a coincidence that the *Aurora* chose the edition usually reserved to celebrate the birthday of the emperor to introduce the empire’s most dangerous critic, the significance is hard to ignore.

The commemoration of these two rituals indicates how divided the two sides had become. When the state tried to curb the celebration of the people to commemorate 7 September, liberal editors called on the people to resist and then defiantly described the ensuing unofficial celebration. Then, while the conservative editors described the lavish festival to honor the emperor on his birthday, the liberal editors pointedly ignored the official celebration, instead focusing on issues that were sure to risk the ire of the state. Compromise and conciliation had never seemed so unlikely.

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<sup>21</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 19 October 1830, #86, italics in the original.

### *Specter of Absolutism*

While contested rituals show how newspapers battled over the role of the people in the state, the underlying principle that ran throughout the opposition newspapers was the defense of popular sovereignty. Foremost in the arguments of liberal editors was the fear that Pedro was becoming increasingly absolutist. A series of unpopular hard-line ministers and accusations of corruption at high levels led opposition editors to fear the dismantling of their hard-won liberal rights. Thrown into this cauldron of distrust was news of a strikingly similar political crisis in France. The July Revolution of 1830 in France presented liberal editors with both a sense of fear from news of a constitutional monarch who turned to absolutism and hope from the successful revolution that overthrew him. All the opposition editors spent weeks discussing the revolution and the parallels between the regimes of Charles X in France and Pedro I in Brazil. Soon after news of the July Revolution broke in Rio, thousands of weapons unexpectedly arrived at the port of Rio de Janeiro, providing editors with evidence that Pedro's government finally showed its absolutist hand. Liberal editors placed these events into the context of ongoing criticism of the government and elevated passions in Rio to a fever pitch.

### *The July Revolution in France*

The perceived triumph of popular sovereignty and the voice of the 'people' in France gave liberal editors a vision of fear and, at the same time, a vision of hope. They feared that Pedro's government would follow the ill-fated steps of Charles X in France to absolutist rule,

but also saw the example of the French people rising up to contest the dissolution of the rights of the citizenry. Significantly, the French opposition was led by newspaper editors.

In late September 1830 the news of the July Revolution and the abdication of Charles X of France hit Rio de Janeiro like a bomb. The *Astrea* reported “the triumph of national sovereignty obtained in France has, with reason, put the souls of Brazilians in an electric state.”<sup>22</sup> The eyewitness John Armitage echoed this idea, saying that when the news arrived from France “the shock was electric.” “Many individuals in Rio, Bahia, Pernambuco and São Paulo,” he reported, “illuminated [their houses] on the occasion.” Armitage may have gleaned his evidence from the *Astrea*, which related that Paulistas celebrated in the streets, putting lights in their windows “to celebrate a historical event so important for the Brazilian people.”<sup>23</sup> Interestingly for our purposes, Armitage believed the Brazilian press played a key role in the excitement produced by the news. He wrote that “the hopes of the patriots, and the fears of the Corcundas [derogatory name for Portuguese sympathizers], were alike excited, and the sensation was instantly communicated throughout the Empire, through the instrumentality of the public journals.”<sup>24</sup>

It is not immediately apparent why the news of the French Revolution would excite Brazilians. While French fashion would have to wait until the Second Empire to gain a strong foothold in Brazil, French political thought was widely quoted and discussed in the Brazilian newspapers.<sup>25</sup> Even Pedro modeled key elements of the 1824 constitution after the

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<sup>22</sup>*Astrea*, 26 October 1830, #631.

<sup>23</sup>*Astrea*, 26 October 1830, #631.

<sup>24</sup>John Armitage, *The History of Brazil*, (NY: AMS Press, 1970 [1836]), vol 2, 80.

<sup>25</sup>For French influences in nineteenth-century Brazil, see Delso Renault, *O Rio Antigo nos Anúncios de Jornais 1808-1850*, (Rio de Janeiro: Livraria J. Olympio, 1969) and *Rio de Janeiro, a Vida da Cidade Refletida nos Jornais (1850-1870)* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1978).

writings of Benjamin Constant. This alone would not be enough to spark the reaction that reverberated throughout the urban center of Brazil. To further investigate the reasons for the reaction, we need to briefly examine events leading up to and during the Glorious Revolution of July 1830.

Charles X ascended to the throne of France in 1824. From the first, he was an unabashed ultra-conservative. He was forced to rule under a charter that he did not create; therefore, he was held against his will to many of the principles of constitutional government. France had a large voting class and the legislature was full of a thriving and vocal opposition party. Throughout his short reign, the French king inflamed the passions of the liberal opposition, restricting the press, threatening to dissolve the chamber of deputies, and increasing the power of the church. The opposition responded by flooding the legislature with liberal deputies and publishing increasingly divisive attacks against the king and his ministers. In August 1829, the king dismissed his conciliatory cabinet and installed a reactionary one. The change enraged the liberals who foresaw a return to absolutist rule. In response, they marshaled their constituency and won a decisive majority in the legislature that met in March 1830. When it became apparent that the king and the legislature would not be able to effectively conduct the business of running the country, the king dissolved the legislature and called for new elections. The returns gave the liberals an even wider margin of victory.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>A good overview of events can be found in John and Muriel Lough, *An Introduction to Nineteenth-Century France*, (London: Longman, 1978), 53-64. See also David M. Pinkney, *The French Revolution of 1830*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), and "The Crowd in the French Revolution of 1830," *The American Historical Review*, 70 (1), (October, 1964), Charles Tilly, *The Contentious French: Four Centuries of Popular Struggle*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), and Jeremy D. Popkin, *Press, Revolution, and Social Identities in France, 1830-1835*, (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).



Before the new legislative session could begin, however, Charles X attempted a drastic coup. On 26 July the government daily the *Moniteur* published four new ordinances. The first one restricted the liberty of the press to the point that the freedom of the press was effectively ended. The second installed new restrictions on the suffrage, severely limiting the number of eligible voters. The third ordinance dissolved the legislature before it had even met, while the fourth set a date for new elections in September. All of the ordinances added up to complete coup d'état of the French government. Charles X effectively ended the experiment of constitutional monarchy and proclaimed himself the absolute monarch.

One of the first books to be published in France about the July Revolution related that once printed, “the fatal news was soon spread; the cafes, the reading rooms are thronged; with bitter smiles the ordinances are listened to.”<sup>27</sup> Interestingly, “it was in the offices of the public papers, that the event produced the greatest effect.” Non-government supported presses were broken into and the typography machines were confiscated. Led by newspaper editors and printers, Parisians took to the streets and tore down all signs of royalty, for “the citizens would no longer endure these images of a king, the assassin of his people.”<sup>28</sup>

After witnessing three days of fighting, Charles X abdicated in favor of his nine-year-old son. The legislature, in an emergency meeting, refused to recognize the Prince. The speculation was that the young Prince was too connected to the policies of his father. He “was admitted to the council, he knew these acts, he has participated, he is an accomplice.”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>The book was quickly translated and republished in English as *Events in Paris, during the 26, 27, 28 and 29 of July, 1830*, (Boston: Carter and Hendee, 1830), 11.

<sup>28</sup> *Events in Paris*, 24.

<sup>29</sup> *Events in Paris*, 41-42.

Instead, the Duke d'Orleans, who had royal blood but was not in the line of succession, was chosen to be "King of the French."

The earliest reports put the tally of dead and wounded at two thousand and five thousand, respectively. The accuracy of this number is not of concern here. What is of concern is that the worldwide reading public was told that thousands of ordinary citizens put their lives on the line to protect the role of the people in the functioning of the state. In fact, the ordinances published in the *Moniteur* were aimed specifically at reducing the power of the people and enhancing the power of the King. From silencing the voice of the people (closing the presses), to overturning the will of the people (dissolving the legislature), to reducing the future say that the people will have in the direction of government (restricting the suffrage), the ordinances attempted to turn France back into an absolutist monarchy—the very fear of the Brazilian liberals.

The parallels between Charles X and Pedro I were unmistakable. Both were constitutional monarchs who never fully accepted that they had to share their rule with the people. Both used religious coronation rituals to assert that their legitimacy stemmed from an otherworldly power. Both surrounded themselves with ultra-conservative and unpopular Ministers. Both responded to criticism by restricting the rights of the people and dissolving the elected assembly. It is easy to see how the news of Charles X's attempted absolutist coup and the reaction of the French people would have a deep impact among the Brazilian liberals who believed they were fighting a similar battle.

The first discussion of the embattled Charles X was an ominous report in the *Aurora Fluminense* in early June 1830. The *Aurora* recognized that the unpopular reactionary ministry had placed the French Monarchy in a perilous position, but the editor believed

passions would eventually subside because the French people retained a voice in government. The people were invested in the system through elections and the free press, and as long as those institutions were in place the government was safe.<sup>30</sup>

The news of the July Revolution hit the streets of Rio in late September. The most pertinent information for the editors, obviously, was the suppression of the liberty of the press and the forced closure of opposition newspapers. The *Novo Jornal do Comércio* reported that the “Prefect of Police confiscated and destroyed the presses of those newspapers that did not obey the ordinances about the suppression of the liberty of the press.”<sup>31</sup> In its next edition the editor elaborated: “The French Minister suspended the liberty of the Press, confiscated all the typographic tools, suppressed some journals, except the Ministerial and the Ultra-Royal journals, [and] dissolved the Camara dos Deputados.”<sup>32</sup> On 2 October the most complete reporting of events began with the publication of the ordinances and included a protest from the French opposition editors. Their fiery response was nothing less than a call to arms:

In the situation in which we are placed, obedience ceases to be a duty. The citizens who are first called upon to obey are the editors of journals.... Today, then, government has violated the laws. We are dispensed from obeying. We shall try to publish our papers without asking the authorization which is imposed upon us. We shall endeavor that today, at least, all France shall receive our papers.<sup>33</sup>

For obvious reasons, opposition editors in Brazil kept close tabs on the travails of their brother editors in France.

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<sup>30</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 2 June 1830, #344.

<sup>31</sup>*Novo Jornal do Comércio*, 21 September 1830, #32.

<sup>32</sup>*Novo Jornal do Comércio*, 22 September 1830, #33.

<sup>33</sup>*Novo Jornal do Comércio*, 2 October 1830, #42. The same protest was printed in *Events in Paris*, 12-14.

Liberal editors used the example of France to raise the awareness of Brazilians to the potential of absolutism in their midst. The *Novo Jornal* believed the example of Charles X's downfall "is most deserving of the attention of the wise, and is useful for the people as well as kings."<sup>34</sup> Further, the *Astrea* believed Pedro would do well to learn the most important lesson provided by the French example: "If Monarchs want to be happy [and] if they desire the prosperity and the Glory of the Nations that they govern," they should disconnect themselves from "corrupt adulators, undignified ministers, and false panegyrists."<sup>35</sup> The *Astrea* believed Charles X had fallen because he led an "anti-national government." The editor also saw "the march of our government in a similar respect in all the subjects of its general administration."<sup>36</sup> Not surprisingly, the conservative *Brasileiro Imparcial* denied any similarity between France and Brazil. "What parallel does the government of Brazil have with France under the rule of Charles X?" the editor mused. "Can the reaction of a people whose rights were trampled, where the law was the whim of a tyrant minister, be compared with the actual state of the Brazilian people who see in action all their rights and guarantees?"<sup>37</sup>

More important for the conservative editors was controlling the effects that the abdication of the king and the choice of the next king by an elected assembly might have for the constitutional monarchy of Brazil. As discussed in chapter III, the conservatives believed Pedro's legitimacy stemmed from his appointment by God. He was above normal men and did not have to answer for his actions. Charles X's supporters had a similar conception of the

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<sup>34</sup>*Novo Jornal do Comércio*, 15 October 1830, #53.

<sup>35</sup>*Astrea*, September 1830, #618.

<sup>36</sup>*Astrea*, 21 September 1830, #616.

<sup>37</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 23 October 1830, #86.

legitimacy of their monarch, yet a report published in the Brazilian *Moderador* made it clear that the majority of Parisians held a different view. The *Moderador* reprinted a manifesto published in France soon after the July Revolution. It argued “by these decrees, the Chief of the Government has made himself superior to the laws, and because of this is outside of its protection.” Consequently, “Carlos Felipe Caputo, otherwise known as Conde de Artois, ceased to be legally King of France.”<sup>38</sup> When the news from France was still murky, the *Brasileiro Imparcial* opined “we expect that France will be tranquil [as long as] the principles of legitimacy are respected.”<sup>39</sup> Those principles dictated that the nine-year-old prince would be named the next king of France. When the Duke d’Orleans was chosen by a hastily assembled legislature, the *Brasileiro Imparcial* felt the decision “trampled underfoot the principles of legitimacy of all the European monarchs.” “Neither the people of Paris,” the editor continued, “nor the legislature have the ability to give the Crown to whom they approve.”<sup>40</sup> The editor believed the legislature acted outside its mandate; therefore, “all that it did is null.”<sup>41</sup> The acceptance of such a break from traditional principles of legitimacy will “necessarily produce new dissensions,” the editor concluded.<sup>42</sup>

While the *Brasileiro Imparcial* saw the revolution as a portent of doom for the French people and a model to be eschewed for the Brazilians, other editors saw different lessons to be learned. Specifically, liberal editors denounced the Old World principles of monarchy where the hereditary rights of the king outweighed the rights of the people. Opposition

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<sup>38</sup>*Moderador*, 6 October 1830, #41.

<sup>39</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 25 September 1830, #78.

<sup>40</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 23 October 1830, #86.

<sup>41</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 30 October 1830, #88.

<sup>42</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 23 October 1830, #86.

editors constantly reminded their readers of the importance of the New World principle of popular sovereignty, expressed through the ability to elect an independent legislature.

Throughout the last three years of Pedro's rule editors in Rio railed against Pedro's ability to dissolve the assembly at will and kept their readers alert to any supposed attempts to silence the voice of the people. The *Astrea* lamented the "abusive power to dissolve [the Assembly] whenever the Executive Power judges it convenient to his interests." The ability of the emperor to override the duly elected representatives of the people "destroys the principle of social order, because the liberty of the people is a benefit of nature, and not the benefit of one man who will only recognize the representatives of the people when they agree with him." This author believed that Pedro created a "society composed of a mass of slaves ruled by an independent and absolute Lord."<sup>43</sup> The fear that Pedro might dissolve the house of deputies increased as tensions increased in Rio. Rumors of mobilization against the legislature abounded in the Court and the surrounding provinces. The *Nova Luz* reported a rumor of impending dissolution in July 1830, while in December a letter writer from São Paulo wrote that "all confirm that the Camara dos Deputados will be dissolved with a coup that will lead to absolutism."<sup>44</sup>

The news from France was the hot topic throughout the second half of 1830. In the middle of October 1830 the *Novo Jornal* published a prospectus of a pamphlet titled "A History of the French Revolution of 1830." The cost was 2\$000 reis (the cost of 25 newspapers), with the proceeds benefiting the French widows and wounded. Within weeks, 564 individual subscribers purchased 1,009 copies of the pamphlet at a total cost of

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<sup>43</sup>*Astrea*, 7 April 1829, #411.

<sup>44</sup>*Astrea*, 4 December 1830, #647, *Nova Luz Brasileira*, 23 July 1830, #62..

2.018\$000—a considerable sum. Obviously, Brazilian newspaper readers had a keen interest in the events of July 1830 in France and were easily able to see the parallels between the French fight for freedom and their own struggle. By hearkening back to the dissolution of the assembly while at the same time drawing parallels to France and reporting rumors swirling around the court, the liberal editors kept the very interested reading public on edge.

### *Arrival of Munitions*

Throughout the analysis of the July Revolution in the liberal newspapers, editor exhorted their readers to be on the lookout for any attempt by Pedro's government to roll-back liberal rights or attempt a coup. It seemed any small event might be enough to send the city into chaos. To many, that event had come when munitions for a ten thousand man army arrived on the Rio quay, ordered by the unpopular minister of war. After detailing the unloading of fourteen thousand firearms, six thousand swords, and thousands of shoes, belts, and hats, the *Astrea* voiced the common initial reaction by the liberals: "Who is this armament for? What personnel does the Government of Brazil have for these arms?"<sup>45</sup> That was a good question. After the debacle of the war over the Banda Oriental, the former Spanish territory that is now Uruguay, the Brazilian army was a shambles. Manned only by conscripts from the North and Northeast, the army played little role in national politics in the last years of Pedro's rule, but the arrival of the unexpected munitions exacerbated the rise of tensions in Rio de Janeiro.

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<sup>45</sup> *Astrea*, 28 October 1830, #632. The *Nova Luz Brasileira* reported the arrival of the munitions as well, writing "do not lament their arrival; lament their use." *Nova Luz Brasileira*, 29 October 1830, #89.

The arrival of the munitions for a Brazilian army that did not exist brought back harrowing memories of June 1828, when Rio was held hostage by an uprising of Irish and German mercenaries, hired by Pedro to fight the unpopular war in the south. Pedro had encouraged hundreds of foreign mercenaries to fight in the service of Brazil, and he had maintained a close relationship with the military in Rio. To celebrate his birthday in 1826 Pedro had promoted dozens of army officers, especially among the foreign mercenaries.<sup>46</sup> The mercenaries of the court were considered favorites of Dom Pedro, especially the German soldiers. “Dom Pedro treated the German soldiers with a certain familiarity,” wrote the mercenary Theodore Bosche, “and they communicated to him their thoughts asking for improvements to their situation.”<sup>47</sup> Pedro’s courting of the foreign mercenaries would come back to haunt him. In early 1828, the newspapers complained of constant skirmishes between the two brigades of Irish soldiers, each numbering five hundred men, and innocent civilians.<sup>48</sup> On 5 April 1828, the *Aurora Fluminense* complained that the Irish troops “continued to give proof of their insolence and bad discipline.” The foreign soldiers “perturbed the tranquility of the hospitable people, throwing rocks and striking different people.” Interestingly, “the person of Dom Pedro put an end to the disturbances, but nothing

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<sup>46</sup>Eduardo Theodoro Bosche, “Quadros Alternados” *Revista Instituto Histórico Geográfico Brasileiro*. 83, 1918, 167. As the eyewitness Maria Graham notes, Pedro involved himself in all things military: “During the time that the Frigates were being prepared [to put down the separatist revolt of the Confederação do Equador in 1824], the activity of the Emperor was more like a young officer recently appointed than a sovereign who could nominate leaders.” Maria Dundas Graham, “Escorço Biográfico do DPI, com uma Notícia do Brasil e do Rio de Janeiro em seu tempo,” *Revista Instituto Histórico Geográfico Brasileiro*, 60, 1938, 87.

<sup>47</sup>Bosche, “Quadros Alternados,” 164.

<sup>48</sup>Mello e Hermeto Lima Barreto Filho, *História da Polícia do Rio de Janeiro: Aspectos da Cidade e da Vida Carioca*, (Rio: Ed. S.A.A. Noite, 1939). The two brigades were stationed in the Campo de Santanna and Praia Vermelha.



will assure us that they will not continue.”<sup>49</sup> Pedro’s person calmed the rioters, thereby protecting the Brazilian bystanders. But the people were put in danger in the first place by Pedro’s insistence on hiring foreign mercenaries, a fact that the liberal editors would not forget.

Throughout May of 1828 the newspapers reported minor uprisings by the foreign troops. Finally, in June of 1828 the German brigades rose up en masse to protest their living conditions and to demand the rewards promised them upon enlisting.<sup>50</sup> The lack of a well-trained Brazilian force was apparent in the ability of the mercenaries to hold the city hostage for several days. After wreaking havoc in the streets, the mutineers agreed to put down their arms. This event precipitated the dissolution of the foreign brigades, a major source of Pedro’s power in the capital, although the last of the troops would not be decommissioned until well into 1829.<sup>51</sup> It also showed in stark relief Pedro’s distrust of the Brazilian troops

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<sup>49</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 5 April 1828, #31, Macaulay reports, without citing actual newspapers, that “antigovernment newspapers fanned the flames of ethnic hatred, complaining about the bodies of drunken Irishmen littering the streets of Rio,” Macaulay, *Dom Pedro I*, 208. Obviously some writers believed this to be the case as well, since the *Aurora Fluminense* felt the need to defend itself: “following the mode of thought of the *Rio Herald*, the *Aurora* is culpable for many of the disorders of the Irish, inflaming the spirit of the People against them; but the People of Rio de Janeiro are calumnized as well by this assertion and the origin of the disorders lies elsewhere, as we have already mentioned.” *Aurora Fluminense*, 30 May 1828, #49. See also Bosche, who wrote that the Irish troops “frequently robbed and assassinated, spreading terror and consternation among the inhabitants,” “Quadros Alternados,” 181.

<sup>50</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 19 May 1828, #45, 28 May 1828, #48, 30 May 1828, #49, 16 June 1828 #55 and almost every edition for the rest of June. Numerous readers sent letters to the editor during this period. One wrote, “what rain of evils falls from the powerful hand of Providence about our heads? It is not enough that the robbers from the runaway slave communities [*Quilombos*] infest all the suburbs, we now have to suffer beatings by undisciplined foreign soldiers,” *Aurora Fluminense*, 28 March 1828, #29. Seidler reports that Pedro had a direct role in quelling the riot by punishing a particularly tyrannical Brazilian officer. Carl Seidler, *Dez anos no Brasil*, Bertholdo Ritter Klinger, trans., (São Paulo: Livraria Martins, 1941), 117.

<sup>51</sup> Bosche was decommissioned on 22 April 1829, “Quadros Alternados,” 203, see also *Aurora Fluminense*, 1 September 1828, #86 where the editor laments the arrival of new troops. He wondered “what the Ministry intends to do with these people, and if the government, after the events in June, hopes to protect Brazil with these foreign mercenaries who are ready to disturb public order after one glass of bad liquor.” As late as March of 1829, the *Aurora* complained about the continued presence of foreign troops in the court. *Aurora Fluminense*, 18 March 1829, #167.

and his favoring of European interests.<sup>52</sup> Adding insult to injury, the emperor called on the British and French warships anchored in the harbor for aid in putting down the revolt.<sup>53</sup>

What was most disconcerting for the liberal newspaper editors was their perception that Pedro did not deem the Brazilian troops worthy. Bosche certainly believed this to be the case. He wrote “D. Pedro always gave preference to the German troops while judging Brazilian nationals only worthy of a glance.”<sup>54</sup> Even Pedro’s elite royal guard was hand-chosen from the most worthy of German mercenaries. When the *Aurora Fluminense* wrote that Brazilians should defend the Emperor, the *Jornal do Comércio* called the liberal editor unpatriotic. Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga of the *Aurora* responded:

This preference given to foreigners for the defense of the Person of the Monarch is a grave insult made to the fidelity of Brazilians. Should the Chief of the Brazilian Nation, who by the unanimous acclamation of the People occupies the Constitutional throne of Brazil, put his confidence in foreigners? What injury to the sentiments of the Emperor, who did not hesitate to put himself at the front of the sons of the *Patria* to free us from European domination and was the first to raise the shout of our full political independence!<sup>55</sup>

Perhaps the most stinging result from the troop revolt was the way it was interpreted by the foreign press. The *New York Advocate* wrote “...thus was the Emperor humiliated at the hands of the foreign troops, and such was the valor of the more than three thousand Brazilian soldiers who were not able to defeat one to one and a half thousand unarmed men!” Thus “ended a barbarous scene animated by authority and occasioned by the bad administration of government.” The *Aurora Fluminense* was incensed. “Nothing was more undignified,” the

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<sup>52</sup>Roderick Barman, *Brazil: The Forging of a Nation*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 151.

<sup>53</sup> Macaulay, *Dom Pedro I*, 210.

<sup>54</sup>Bosche, “Quadros Alternados,” 185.

<sup>55</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 18 March 1829, #167.

editor wrote, “than the [*Advocate*’s] treatment of the August Person of His Majesty and the Brazilians.”<sup>56</sup> In a system where the emperor’s person was the key to political stability and the security of the nation, that person had to be protected at all costs. And in keeping with the nascent nationalism of the period, perhaps better described as growing xenophobia, liberal editors argued that his person should be protected by Brazilians.

The arrival of the munitions in 1830 only reinforced the liberals’ position that Pedro did not trust Brazilians. The *Perilampo* echoed the *Aurora*’s comments from two years earlier when the editor reminded his readers that “to defend the liberties of the country is the right only of Brazilians.” Instead, the “Government called foreign mercenaries to enslave us.”<sup>57</sup> Similarly, the *República* wrote, “the Brazilian army on water and land is almost all commanded by foreigners, and almost all the officers are of this adventurous class.” What made this so disconcerting was that “the mandate of the foreign troops is to defend the Brazilian dynasty.” The editor here implied that foreign mercenaries defended *only* the Braganza dynasty and not the freedom of Brazil. Nor were they in the country to protect the Brazilian people or the constitution.<sup>58</sup> Rumors were quick to spread about the impending arrival of masses of foreign troops to support Pedro’s supposed absolutist coup. “The whole world knows” wrote the *Astrea* “that the Government intends to conquer Brazil with foreign troops.” “Now the arms arrive,” the editor continued “soon the soldiers will arrive.”<sup>59</sup> The *Nova Luz* argued that the great foreign army was already in Brazil. The editor reported a rumor that the German colony at “Gongo Soco possesses a great slave army who do military

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<sup>56</sup>*New York Advocate* as quoted in *Aurora Fluminense*, 21 November 1828, #120.

<sup>57</sup>*Perilampo Popular*, 18 December 1830, #8.

<sup>58</sup>*República*, 8 December 1830, #20.

<sup>59</sup>*Astrea*, 30 October 1830, #633.

exercises every afternoon.”<sup>60</sup> Closer to home, the *Tribuno* reported seeing “dismissed foreigners [mercenaries] passing by the wharfs armed [with munitions] only found in the Arsenal.”<sup>61</sup> The conservatives even acknowledged the wild rumors spreading through the city. In an attempt to show the absurdity of the rumors, the *Brasileiro Imparcial* wrote “the credulous believe the most absurd lies such as that His Majesty has contracted with the ex-King Charles X to send the French army to Brazil to support absolutism.” Even this editor, who constantly reported on the tranquil and docile public, had to admit, “public spirit has been in some agitation recently.”<sup>62</sup>

Liberal editors portrayed the specter of absolutism as a very real evil facing the Brazilian people. They kept their readers on edge by constantly framing the alleged missteps of Pedro’s government as attempts to curtail the rights of the people. When a surprisingly similar foreign parallel was added to the mix, followed immediately by disturbing information about the arrival of weapons for an army that did not yet exist, the liberals editors believed they had made the case that the government of Brazil had abandoned the people.

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<sup>60</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 10 December 1830, #101.

<sup>61</sup>*Tribuno do Povo*, 22 January 1831, #8.

<sup>62</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 2 November 1830, #89.

### *The Impact of a New Corps of Editors*

Calls for increased vigilance were heeded by a new corps of newspaper editors who started writing in late 1830.<sup>63</sup> Throughout the period under study here, new newspapers came and went; many had only a fleeting impact on the political scene before ending their publications. What set the newspapers of late 1830 apart was the overwhelming animosity toward the government of Pedro and their anti-Portuguese rhetoric. The editor who had the greatest effect on Rio politics from this group was the young firebrand from the small Northeast state of Paraíba, Antonio Borgês da Fonseca.

What little we know of Borgês da Fonseca starts in Paraíba in the late 1820s.<sup>64</sup> He was a mestiço, which was hardly uncommon for Brazilians from the Northeast. His heritage easily identified him as a native Brazilian and not a member of the urban Portuguese class, and probably precluded him from the highest social and economic circles in the Northeast even though his family was “well situated economically.”<sup>65</sup> While his education is unknown, he was an inveterate newspaper editor. He founded twenty-three periodicals over his long career and constantly tested the limits of accepted public speech.<sup>66</sup> While the title of the newspaper he published in Rio, *Repúblico*, might make one speculate that he desired

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<sup>63</sup>Four of the most radical liberal newspapers began printing in late 1830: *Repúblico*, 2 October 1830; *Perilampo Popular*, 24 November 1830; *Espelho de Justiça*, 1 December 1830; and *Tribuno do Povo*, 18 December 1830.

<sup>64</sup>We do know he was born 7 April 1808 – the year Dom João arrived in Brazil and the day Pedro I would abdicate the throne. Maria Lúcia de Souza Rangel, *A Atuação Política de um Publicista: Antonio Borges da Fonseca*, (PUC: Campinas, 1995), 29.

<sup>65</sup>Souza Rangel, *A Atuação Política*, 29.

<sup>66</sup>Mário Márcio de A. Santos, *Um Homem Contra o Imperio: Vida e Lutar de Antonio Borges da Fonseca*, (Recife: FUNDARPE, 1995), 16.

revolution and social upheaval, he claimed he wanted only a return to the promises of the independence period and to “defend national liberty.”<sup>67</sup>

His first newspaper, the *Gazeta Paraibana*, placed him in the radical camp. He attracted plenty of attention from both liberal supporters in Rio and representatives of the state in Pernambuco. He was tried and acquitted multiple times for abuses of the liberty of the press, spent several months in jail, and narrowly escaped an assassination attempt. All this attention made him a good candidate for radical flagbearer. While still in the Northeast, he became involved with a revolutionary organization comprised of self-styled defenders of the nation. The purpose of the group, called the *Jardineiros* or *Carpinteiros*, was to prevent the victory of the supposed absolutists, represented by the Portuguese members of the court in Rio. Early in Brazil’s independence period, the Northeast was politically fragile. It was the only region of Brazil to see actual fighting between the forces of Portugal and Brazil, and the provinces of Pará and Pernambuco remained volatile well into the late 1830s. Brazil’s only serious separatist movement developed in the Northeast in 1824. Called the Confederation of the Equator, the anti-Portuguese movement was eventually crushed by the Brazilian military. While we cannot tell if Borgês da Fonseca played a role in the confederation, we can be sure he witnessed both the revolution and its destruction. As a result of ongoing strife, Brazilians in the Northeast held a more aggressive attitude toward the Portuguese and were particularly wary of any apparent display of favoritism displayed toward them by the emperor.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>*República*, 2 October 1830, #1.

<sup>68</sup>Hendrik Kraay, “Between Brazil and Bahia: Celebrating Dois de Julho in Nineteenth-Century Salvador,” *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 31, (1999); Jeffrey Mosher, “Challenging Authority: Political Violence and the Regency in Pernambuco, Brazil, 1831-1835,” *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 37, (Winter 2000), and “Political Mobilization, Party Ideology, and Lusophobia in Nineteenth-Century Brazil: Pernambuco, 1822-1850,” *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 80 no.4, (2000).

Borgês da Fonseca was appointed a political agitator by the *Jardineiros* and continued to be a loud voice for radical liberal principles far from the court. The *Aurora Fluminense* in Rio kept close tabs on the young editor from the Northeast, including reporting on his multiple arrests and acquittals for violating the liberty of the press.<sup>69</sup> The first edition of the *Gazeta Paraibana* was reviewed as a welcome addition to the fight for governmental responsibility, even though the young journalist was lambasted by the Rio press for his spelling mistakes and backwoods orthography. Soon Fonseca moved on to the more important province of Pernambuco and published the *Abelha Pernambucana*. By mid 1828 he was the head of the *Jardineiros*, according to his self-serving autobiography, and led all the anti-Portuguese activities in the Northeast.<sup>70</sup> The Rio press continued to follow his movements, and the *Astrea* reprinted multiple articles written by Fonseca.<sup>71</sup> One article in particular garnered much discussion in Rio about the role of liberal editors and the state of political violence in the Northeast. In it, Borgês da Fonseca reported that he narrowly escaped another assassination attempt. This latest attack was the fourth attempt on his life “for being Editor of the *Abelha*, defending the Constitution, and speaking the truth.” In fiery language indicative of his writing style, he wrote: “If these monsters are persuaded that I will stop defending the Constitution, they are mistaken. Assassinating me will have little

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<sup>69</sup> For a report of the *Abelha*’s court battles, see *Aurora Fluminense*, 14 June 1830, #349. The *Aurora* also reported that Fonseca was arrested and held without charge for several months, *Aurora Fluminense*, 1 April 1829, #172.

<sup>70</sup> Antonio Borgês da Fonseca, *Manifesto Politico, Apontamentos de Minha Vida Politica e da Vida Politica do Dr. Urbano Sabino Pessoa de Melo*, (Recife: Typ. Commercial de G. H. de Mira, 1867).

<sup>71</sup> Fonseca penned several letters to the editor of the *Astrea* under the pseudonym “Recolhido.” One of the letters was brought up for trial in Rio and convicted: *Astrea*, 13 November 1828, #356.

importance. Death for the Patria is a very dignified fate. I will only stop writing when I stop living.”<sup>72</sup>

As tensions rose in the court at the end of the decade, Fonseca closed his newspaper in the Northeast and moved to the Imperial capital to be closer to the action. The *Jardineiros* now had a point man for the rapidly approaching crisis. Coming from the Northeast, an area dominated by large plantations with relatively small urban centers, Borgês da Fonseca must have been awed by the thriving metropolis of Rio. He quickly fell in with other members of his secret society, who, according to his autobiography, were some of the most powerful men in Rio politics: Bernardo Pereira de Vasconcelos, Padre Jozé Custodio Dias, Jozé da Costa Carvalho, and others. The *Jardineiros* helped Borgês da Fonseca establish the *Repúblico* and the young editor soon became the talk of the town. The first edition of the *Repúblico* set the tone for the next eight months in Rio. In it, Borgês da Fonseca counseled that “for a people who want to be free, for a people who fight with enemies clear and hidden as we do, there can never be enough periodicals that unmask the enemies of national liberty.”<sup>73</sup> The editor believed he found Rio already in a state of crisis, and it was his duty as a letrado to attack the government for its “anti-Brazilian” policies and inform the people of impending strife. In such crises, he wrote, “all conspire against the oppressor; the same fire burns in every heart.” In an allusion that fulfilled the fears of the conservatives, he warned, “Paris on the third of August 1830 serves as proof.”<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>*Astrea*, 27 April 1830, #560. For a report of an earlier attack against Fonseca, see *Aurora Fluminense*, 20 November 1829, #268.

<sup>73</sup>*Repúblico*, 2 October 1830, #1.

<sup>74</sup>*Repúblico*, 2 October 1830, #1.



The conservative press was quick to downplay the *República*'s dire warnings. The *Verdadeiro Patriota* wrote, "the *República* depicts the throne and the Constitution on the precipice." The liberals want the government to bow to their demands, this conservative editor wrote, and "if it does not, they promptly claim that the revolution is near."<sup>75</sup> The *Patriota* continued to rail against the effects of the *República*'s language. The *República* "horrifies all thinking men [and] is spread through all of the Empire to make me and many people lose sleep."<sup>76</sup> Perhaps most significant for the conservative editors was that the *República* "wants to destroy the inviolability of the Emperor."<sup>77</sup> Increasingly, the conservatives believed that the liberals were offending the person of the Empire with hints and accusations that served to diminish confidence in his leadership. The *Brasileiro Imparcial* complained that "by invoking the respectable name of the Emperor, [opposition editors] make it sound odious to the people, now painting his court as the most corrupt and immoral, now his ministers as traitors to the nation."<sup>78</sup> Perhaps there is a kernel of truth to that. The *Astrea* published a letter from a philanthropic group in São Paulo formed to provide aid to prisoners. The government forced the society to close, but the blame fell squarely on the shoulders of Pedro. Whereas only a year before, Pedro was praised for his beneficent support of disease sufferers in a town in the interior, or visiting slaves in the poor hospital, now Pedro was being attacked for not caring about the downtrodden. With an over-the-top tone, the letter lamented to the prisoners: "our hearts are full of pain to announce the sad sentence of your abandonment; we will not visit you again; we will not cover your

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<sup>75</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 28 October 1830, #6.

<sup>76</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 14 December 1830, #15.

<sup>77</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 28 October 1830, #6.

<sup>78</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 30 November 1830, #97.

nudity; we will not console you; we will not help burden your disgrace...”<sup>79</sup> The liberal editors slowly were coming to lose their respect for Pedro and were beginning to portray him as the cause of the crisis they believed Brazil faced.

The arrival of a new corps of newspaper editors who were not interested in conciliation was a bad sign for Pedro’s government. Conservative editors increased their calls for judicial vigilance and action against these editors, but, as we saw in chapter II, by late 1830 the juries that judged cases of abuses of the press had become notorious for their support of liberal positions. Radical editors were given free reign to voice their opinions about the direction of the state and to exhort their readers to resist.

### ***The Beginning of the End***

By the end of 1830, no one could deny that Pedro’s government was reaching a crisis point. The *Astrea* complained of broadsides “affixed on street corners whose material leaves no doubt that they are the work of absolutists.” The radical press elevated political discussion to a disruptive pitch, with Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* now referring to Pedro as the “crowned burglar.”<sup>80</sup> The *Nova Luz* lambasted its readers who “have already returned to sleep after the French Revolution” of 1830. “Be very alert,” the editor cautioned, “for tyranny never sleeps.”<sup>81</sup> The death of a very popular liberal editor at the order of a

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<sup>79</sup>*Astrea*, 28 October 1830, #632.

<sup>80</sup>*República*, 4 December 1830, #19.

<sup>81</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 7 December 1830, #100.

government official, followed by fears of a Portuguese uprising made possible by the absence of Pedro from Rio made the dire warnings of the opposition newspapers seem real.

### *Death of an Editor*

The liberals believed their fears of an uprising of foreign mercenaries were realized when the news of the assassination of the radical São Paulo editor Libero Badaró arrived in Rio. The first reports mentioned only that two German soldiers in the employ of the government gunned down the editor in the streets. Later articles disclosed that a government-appointed district judge, Japi-Assú, hired the mercenaries to assassinate Badaró. The death of a liberal editor at the hands of foreign mercenaries under order of a government official was a too-clear message for many editors in Rio that Pedro had abandoned them altogether.

Libero Badaró was an unlikely martyr to Brazilian independence. He was born in Italy, where he trained as a medical doctor. He was drawn to Brazil to study botany, like so many European travelers in this period.<sup>82</sup> He settled in São Paulo and was soon immersed in a hotbed of liberal activity. The *Astrea* claimed that São Paulo at this time “gathered together the flower of liberal doctrines from all parts of the empire.”<sup>83</sup> A major reason why São Paulo was such an important area for the development of political thought was because of the law school. Founded in 1827, the law schools in São Paulo and Olinda, in the

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<sup>82</sup>See for example, Johann Baptist von Spix and Carl Friedrich Philipp von Martius, *Travels in Brazil in the Years 1817-1820*, (London: Longman et al, 1824); H.M. Brackenridge, *Voyage to South America Performed by Order of the American Government*, (London: John Miller, 1820); Alexander Caldcleuch, *Travels in South America, During the Years 1819, 1820,*, (London: John Murrall, 1825); and the excellent overview, Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, (NY: Routledge Press, 1992).

<sup>83</sup> *Astrea*, 11 December 1830, #649.

Northeast province of Pernambuco, soon attracted students from all areas of Brazil. “The enthusiasm of Brazilian youth,” wrote the *Astrea*, led to a celebration of all things Brazilian and a growing divide between Old World and New World political structures.<sup>84</sup>

Badaró was caught up in the excitement of the time and place. He soon abandoned his medical and botanical aspirations to focus on the youthful occupation of the day: politics. As a man of letters, it was natural for him to gravitate to the newspaper profession, and he soon began one of São Paulo’s first newspapers, the *Constitucional Observador*. Through his occupation as professional pundit, he maintained close contacts with the law students in São Paulo. Indeed, several students worked with him on the newspaper.<sup>85</sup> His early death at age thirty-two galvanized the student population and provided the next generation of Brazilian statesmen the first martyr to Brazilian independence.

The death of Badaró had an equally powerful impact on Rio. The *República* saw the assassination as a declaration of war: “The Doctor Badaró was assassinated. Should we continue in lethargy? Are we insensitive to such disgraces? I abhor the idea of seeing human blood spilt, but, if the government does not protect us, what should we do?”<sup>86</sup> While the *Astrea*, formerly known as the most radical newspaper in Rio, satisfied itself with eulogies of Badaró and a discussion of his funeral in São Paulo, the *República* continued paving a course of revolution.<sup>87</sup> Elevating the murder to a national attack, the editor wrote, “the assassination of Dr. Badaró was not perpetrated only against the person of the illustrious editor of the

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<sup>84</sup>*Astrea*, 11 December 1830, #649.

<sup>85</sup>Andrew J. Kirkendall, *Classmates: Male Student Culture and the Making of a Political Class in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 26.

<sup>86</sup>*República*, 4 December 1830, #19.

<sup>87</sup>“Dr. Badaró was interred yesterday, accompanied by 800 funeral tapers and 5,000 people.” *Astrea*, 14 December 1830, #650.

Constitutional Observer, the Constitution, Liberty, and the Security of each Brazilian citizen was also attacked.”<sup>88</sup>

What bothered the Rio pundits the most was the blatant, to their eyes, corruption of the court-appointed alleged assassin, and the protection afforded him by the government. The *Perilampo* could not believe “a magistrate [is] an enemy of his own country!” More disturbing was that Japi-Assú was “the satellite of a corrupt government in whom the Public security of the city of São Paulo was confided.”<sup>89</sup> The discussion of a corrupt court-appointed magistrate recalls the discussion of corruption in the judicial system discussed in an earlier chapter. As related there, the *Aurora Fluminense* believed “all the world knows that we have had, and have, many Judges who dishonor the robes and damage society.”<sup>90</sup> Even more damaging, the same editor reported “from all the angles of Brazil come the complaints of the people against the indolence, corruption, and arbitrariness of the magistrates.”<sup>91</sup> As in that earlier chapter, the liberal editors called on the government to protect them and avenge the death of Badaró by prosecuting the corrupt official. The *Repúblico* mused, “what will happen to the assassin Candido Ladislau Japi-Assú who the government has protected?” Since “the cause is the cause of the nation, if Japi-Assú is not executed, we are betrayed.” In a statement that encapsulated the growing wariness toward Pedro’s government and the dissolving belief that Pedro was the ultimate protector of the

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<sup>88</sup>*Repúblico*, 11 December 1830, #21.

<sup>89</sup>*Perilampo Popular*, 8 December 1830, #5.

<sup>90</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 13 July 1829, #212.

<sup>91</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 17 July 1829, #214.

people, Borgêes da Fonseca ended his discussion with a dire observation: “The government looks to our ruin; it wants to betray us.”<sup>92</sup>

### *Minas*

Badaró’s death and the liberal intimation of corruption at the highest level made life intolerable for Pedro in Rio. Public confidence and security had dissolved to the point where one eyewitness related that “an overthrow of the state threatened all the institutions and free people” of the nation.<sup>93</sup> Recalling earlier days when he was able to recoup popularity through action, Pedro decided to leave the tension-filled court city for a two-month jaunt through the neighboring province of Minas.

Rumors abounded about Pedro’s decision to take the trip. Some said that he was “presenting himself to the judgment of the public.” Others said he went to quell the fiery passion of federalism brewing in the always rebellious and powerful province of Minas Gerais. Still others warned that he went to Minas “to proclaim absolutism, which would then be imitated in the Court and in all the other provinces to which the secret cabinet had sent emissaries.”<sup>94</sup>

The most plausible purpose of Pedro’s trip was to campaign for the reelection of his Minister, José Antonio da Silva Maia. Pedro ruled as a patron led his clients. He was responsible for their successes. Maia was particularly unpopular with the opposition,

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<sup>92</sup>*Repúblico*, 8 December 1830, #20.

<sup>93</sup>Silveiro Candido de Faria, “Breve Historia dos felizes acontecimentos politicos no Rio de Janeiro nos dias 6, e 7 de Abril de 1831,” Biblioteca Nacional MS, n/p.

<sup>94</sup>Candido de Faria, *Breve Historia*, n/p.

however. The *Nova Luz* wrote that “Senhor Maia is well known throughout Brazil, and we judge it impossible that the illustrious Mineiros would reelect him.” As if willing the desired result, the editor concluded, “it is impossible, impossible.”<sup>95</sup> Pedro hoped his presence would turn the tide in the favor of his minister. Pedro was accustomed to using his person as a powerful political tool or weapon. Early in his reign Pedro learned that his presence at a critical juncture could spell the difference between calm and crisis, but much had changed since then.

Liberal newspaper editors argued vociferously against the trip. It would be damaging to the entire nation, they argued, to have the person of the Emperor so far away from the mechanisms of power. What if an outside power threatened the autonomy of the nation? What if the legislature had to be called into an emergency session? What if the local absolutist faction threatened the political basis of the constitutional monarchy?<sup>96</sup> These things required the presence of the emperor. While he was at least a week’s journey from the capital city, the nation was left leaderless. The dire ends prophesized for Rio in the absence of the emperor led one contemporary to reassure a distant friend that the nation is “not leaderless, and His Majesty and the Monarchy have many friends,” even if the periodicals were “depicting Brazil in revolution.”<sup>97</sup> While the conservative press responded that there was “no urgency, since we are at peace both externally and internally, and when unforeseen events call for the presence of His Majesty, a few short days will see his return to the

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<sup>95</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 26 November 1830, #97.

<sup>96</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 3 December 1830, #99.

<sup>97</sup>“Cartas de João Loureiro,” *Revista Instituto Histórico Geográfico Brasileiro*, vol. 76, 360.

capital,” the liberal editors maintained that “the absence of the Emperor from the Court and at such a distance is damaging to the Public interests and is therefore unconstitutional.”<sup>98</sup>

Pedro’s trip to Minas became a power play between the opposing groups in Rio. One eyewitness reported the “Ministers [and their supporters] wanted to display the incontestable right Pedro had to travel to any province of the Empire, while the liberals contested this right.”<sup>99</sup> Indeed, the *República* and the *Tribuna* argued that Pedro was acting unconstitutionally by not asking permission from the legislature before undertaking any journey outside of the court. Essentially, the editors wanted the emperor to be under the control of the people, through their elected representatives in this case, at all times. Since the emperor did not receive permission, Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* believed Pedro traveled without the authority of being “Chief of Executive Power.” “He does not have the attributes of the Holy Trinity,” the *República* argued, “to stay here as the Holy Spirit and go there as Father or Son.”<sup>100</sup>

The conservative editors thought this line of reasoning “without doubt the apex of insolence.” “Never before,” wrote the *Moderador*, “have we seen a piece of paper that contained more insults to the Emperor.” Instead of questioning his motives for traveling to Minas, Brazilians “should praise His Majesty for wanting to identify himself with his people.”<sup>101</sup> The *Brasileiro Imparcial* believed the constitutional system of Brazil was perfectly suited to the absence of the monarch. “A Monarch,” the editor wrote, “should visit

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<sup>98</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 28 December 1830, #104; *Nova Luz Brasileira*, 3 December 1830, #99.

<sup>99</sup>Candido de Faria, *Breve Historia*.

<sup>100</sup>*República*, 19 February 1831, #40; for the *Tribuna*’s discussion of “the trip so unconstitutional,” see *Tribuna do Povo*, 10 March 1831, #20.

<sup>101</sup>*Moderador*, 11 December 1830, #59.



all the provinces of the state, as long as he is able to do this without causing harm to the public, and it is certain that His Majesty will not cause any inconvenience because of the system of constitutional government, namely that through the division of powers the affairs of state can run their natural course.”<sup>102</sup> The constitution did prohibit the emperor from leaving Brazil without the approval of the legislature, but it did not prohibit him from visiting the provinces. The reason for the conservative backlash stemmed from more than a legal standpoint, though. By suggesting Pedro needed approval for all his actions from the legislature, the liberals reduced the autonomy and authority of the emperor. The conservatives thought this was another attempt by the liberals to place Pedro in a subservient position to the people he ruled. Instead, the conservatives argued that the ability of Pedro to travel throughout the empire “is a right that he uses freely and with perfect satisfaction of all in the different voyages.”<sup>103</sup>

To counteract the negative press about Pedro’s trip to Minas, the conservative newspapers never missed a chance to describe the joyous crowds awaiting Pedro in every town he traveled through. The *Verdadeiro Patriota* thought “it is clear that the desired end of the *República* is to drown out the demonstrations of jubilation [where] the people of Minas have toasted the guardian angel of Brazil”<sup>104</sup> Therefore, the conservative editor took pains to relate the efforts of the Mineiros to welcome their emperor. “In all these places,” the editor related, “an immense crowd of people ran to kiss the hands of their Majesties.”<sup>105</sup>

Specifically, when Pedro entered the provincial capital of São João d’El-Rei, he entered

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<sup>102</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 28 December 1830, #104.

<sup>103</sup>*Moderador*, 11 December 1830, #59.

<sup>104</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 8 February 1831, #31.

<sup>105</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 4 March 1831, #38.

through a magnificent triumphal arch. The bishop approached Pedro and offered a crucifix for him to kiss. Finally, as Pedro traveled to the main church in the center of the city he was “followed by an innumerable crowd.”<sup>106</sup> The effort by this conservative editor recalls an earlier episode where the conservative editors discussed a visible, but silent populace in conformance with the desired social and political goals of the government. Throngs of people awaiting the arrival of the emperor, whether true or not, could serve as an effective political tool in the court, where admiration and respect for the Emperor were decidedly on the wane.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the conservative editors, the trip was a disaster. Instead of throngs gathered to welcome his arrival, as the *Verdadeiro Patriota* reported, in almost every major village he visited Pedro was faced with crowds defiantly commemorating the death of Libero Badaró.<sup>107</sup> Coupled with the defeat of his minister in the election, Pedro finally came to realize the fragile state of his government. On 22 February 1831 the emperor responded to this loss of power with a biting invective aimed at the liberals in Rio de Janeiro. Even though his message was delivered orally in front of an assembled crowd in the provincial capital of Minas Gerais, the far reach of the press ensured that the emperor’s message was heard in the court—with dire consequences.

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<sup>106</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 1 February 1831, #29.

<sup>107</sup>Tobias Monteiro, *Historia do Imperio*, 191-192.

## *Conclusion*

Late in 1830, the *Repúblico* informed its readers “the persecutions, the treasons of the government, the lack of faith in its word, etc., have put us on alert.”<sup>108</sup> It would be more accurate to say that the opposition newspapers had put the public on alert. The events leading up to Pedro’s proclamation on 22 February 1831 each had a small but cumulative effect on popular opinion and the support of the people for Pedro and his government. The liberal editors played a decisive role in publishing and interpreting the long list of events that led to the crisis. Considering that three of the most important events in this crisis-filled period took place outside of Rio (the July Revolution in France, the death of Libero Badaró, and the proclamation), newspapers were essential for keeping the Rio readership informed. Likewise, the interpretation of the editors in Rio found audiences outside of the capital. The *Brasileiro Imparcial* argued that the radical press in Rio was causing consternation in the provinces: “We read letters from some Provinces telling us that the people there live full of fear, expecting each moment to receive sad news from Rio de Janeiro—that this court is in anarchy, and civil war reigns.”<sup>109</sup> In no other period up to this point did the editors in the court have such a powerful role in guiding public opinion and forcing the government to alter its course.

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<sup>108</sup>*Repúblico*, 4 December 1830, #19.

<sup>109</sup>*Brasileiro Imparcial*, 14 December 1830, #101.

## CHAPTER VI:

### RHETORIC AND RIOT

The end of the First Empire came quickly for Emperor Pedro I. He returned from Minas Gerais on 11 March 1831 and in less than a month sought the safety of a British warship after abdicating the throne in favor of his 5-year-old son. In that time, a cumulative series of events put Rio in a state of virtual war, with roving bands of armed combatants fighting a turf war in the center of the city. Ever present throughout these eventful weeks was the periodical press. From the publication and debate of the proclamation to the Mineiros, to the editors' involvement in the street fighting, to the printed call for Pedro to right the wrongs of the state, the editors played a significant role in shaping and guiding events. This chapter will detail those events and the role the editors played in them to show how the press changed the political culture of Rio de Janeiro.

The official reports and newspaper interpretations of the riot allow for an analysis of the varied and numerous ways the press impacted events. The press shaped the discourse surrounding the riot and involved the reading and listening public in political affairs. By playing a personal role in the riot, portraying the riot as an attack against the nation, and framing the debate around concepts both easily identifiable and worth defending, the editors popularized politics and changed the way the people interacted with the state. A close

examination of the last four weeks of Pedro's reign reveals that the press had become the dominant vehicle and forum for the exchange of ideas, both official and unofficial.

### ***The Nights of the Broken Bottles***

Pedro was slated to return to Rio on 17 March 1831. Because of the hostile reception he received in Minas Gerais, the emperor turned home earlier than expected and arrived at his Palace at Boa Vista on 11 March. The proclamation Pedro gave in Ouro Preto on 22 February arrived in Rio on the same day as Pedro, sparking numerous discussions, debates, and arguments in the press. Pedro used the proclamation as a vehicle to express his outrage at the vociferous newspaper editors of Rio and called on his supporters to defend the monarchy against the would-be traitors. The response of the liberal press laid bare Pedro's perceived lack of confidence in the people of Rio and the heated reactions to the proclamation in the press put the city on edge. When Pedro left Rio de Janeiro, journalists were debating abstract principles of popular sovereignty. By the time he returned, editors had started telling an agitated public that “the government proceeds with its intention to enslave us.”<sup>1</sup>

The commercial corps of the city had planned a reception in the streets of Rio to welcome Pedro back to the city and show support for the beleaguered emperor.<sup>2</sup> Although, as described in an earlier chapter, pomp-filled political rituals were a mainstay of First

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<sup>1</sup>*República*, 12 March 1831, #46.

<sup>2</sup>On 11 March, the *Camara Municipal* of the city of Rio de Janeiro granted a request from the *Corpo do Commercio* to have bands of music march down the streets of Quitanda and Rosario. *Posturas Camara Municipal*, 11 March 1831 (Arquivo da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro).

Empire Rio's calendar, the polarizing figure of the emperor provoked dissension. In the current climate, even an event as regular and expected as a welcoming parade for the returning emperor was met with hostility by the liberal press. In late February, the *Tribuna do Povo* informed its readers that the businessmen had started a subscription to pay for the triumphal arches that would span the narrow streets of the city center. An eyewitness and author of a short history of the first four months of 1831 wrote "since February, known agents of the Secret Cabinet promoted a subscription to solemnize with public festivities the happy return" of Pedro.<sup>3</sup> The radical editor of the *Tribuna* believed an expensive celebration was wasteful in the midst of so much want.<sup>4</sup> Will the emperor "continue to close his eyes and ears to the truth?" the editor wrote in early March. "The unhealthy praises" of his adulators "have corrupted his heart and made him inaccessible to the voices of reason, truth, and philosophy."<sup>5</sup>

As it turned out, Pedro's early return precluded any organized celebration in his honor. Instead, beginning on 13 March, the pro-Pedro residents of Rio took to the streets in spontaneous celebration. They lit candles in their windows, started bonfires at street corners, and hired bands to play music as they paraded in celebration. Portuguese clerks, businessmen, and tradesmen brazenly marched through the commercial district of the city daring the Brazilians to respond. The challenge would not go unanswered.

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<sup>3</sup>Joaquim Francisco Alves Branco Muniz Barreto, *Historia da Revolução do Brasil, com peças officiaes e facsimile da propria mão de dom Pedro, por hum membro da Camara dos Deputados*, (Rio, 1831). Another pamphlet writer seemed to agree: "The Brazilians knew perfectly well that these festivities were [designed] more to insult the Liberals than to applaud the return of the Monarch." José Martiniano d'Alencar, *Precizo dos Successos que o Occasionaram o Sete de Abril, dirigido aos Cearenses pelos seus deputados*, (Rio: Torres, [9 April] 1831).

<sup>4</sup>*Tribuna do Povo*, 23 February 1831, #16.

<sup>5</sup>*Tribuna do Povo*, 10 March 1831, #20.

Over the three days of 13, 14, and 15 March 1831 the streets of Rio de Janeiro were a veritable battleground where groups of thugs roamed at night, armed with whatever was at hand. The “Portuguese” group appeared to be much better led and armed, and by all accounts the “Brazilians” were repulsed with heavy casualties at each point of combat.<sup>6</sup> The fighting was restricted to an area of Rio de Janeiro known as the *Cidadel*a. The *Cidadel*a comprised the commercial district of the center of town, and it was near the palace, the docks, and the customs house. The bottom floors of the buildings housed the shops, while the mostly Portuguese shop owners lived on the second floors. It was from these floors, especially on the heavily commercial Quitanda street, where a rain of bottles showered down upon Brazilian rioters below, giving the riot its name: The Nights of the Broken Bottles (*As Noites das Garrafadas*).<sup>7</sup>

After three days of fighting, passions in the city had reached their breaking point. A few arrests were made, including those of pro-opposition members of the military, and an official investigation had begun. These efforts toward resolution did nothing to appease the Brazilians who believed the police stood by idly while the Portuguese successfully repulsed

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<sup>6</sup>Gladys Sabina Ribeiro's exhaustive work on Portuguese immigration and the socio-economic makeup of First Empire Rio de Janeiro tackles in more depth the questions of race and nationalism raised by the riot. She contends that the categories of “Portuguese” and “Brazilian” were political constructs used as tools to gain political and economic power. “National identity was being constructed and nationality was above all a political characterization, varying according to the moment, the circumstances, and the political actor,” Ribeiro, *A Liberdade em Construção: Identidade Nacional e Conflitos Antilusitanos no Primeiro Reinado*, (Rio: Relume Dumará, 2002), 279. In her eyes, the riot was more a turf war between rival groups vying for power than an expression of honest nationalist sentiment. Racial and national categories were exceptionally complicated, especially in the hindsight of the historian. It is clear though, as we will see below, that the identifiers “Brazilian” and “Portuguese” were more powerful rhetorical weapons wielded by the press than actual descriptors.

<sup>7</sup>There are several illuminating histories of urban Rio de Janeiro that describe the *Cidadel*a and other areas of First Empire Rio de Janeiro. See Felisbello Freire, *Historia da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro*, (Rio: Revista das Tribunaes, 1912); Luiz Gonçalves dos Santos (Padre Pererecia) *Memórias para Servir à História do Reino do Brasil*, (Rio: Z. Valverde, 1943 [1825]); Vivaldo Coaracy, *Memórias da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro*, (São Paulo: Editoria da Universidade de São Paulo, 1988); and Brasil Gerson, *História das Ruas do Rio*, (Rio: Editora Nova Aguilar, 2000). For an analysis of the importance of the *Cidadel*a in relation to the riots of March 1831, see Ribeiro, *A Liberdade em Construção*.

the bands of Brazilian youths. The next three weeks were full of random violence, accusations, fear, and distrust of the government. In retrospect, it comes as no surprise that Pedro I abdicated his throne on 7 April. At the time, however, a full-scale civil war seemed a much more likely outcome. The power to guide public opinion that the press had gained over the last three years of the First Empire placed editors in an ideal position to shape interpretations of the riot. Editors on both sides of the debate recognized the seminal importance of the riot and quickly entered the public arena to argue for their positions.

According to the conservative editors, thousands of loyal Brazilians peacefully celebrated the return of their leader. They were legally demonstrating, shouting vivas to the emperor, when they were “interrupted by shouts of war and rebellion.”<sup>8</sup> The *Moderador* reported that in response to liberal aggression, “the loyal inhabitants of the City gathered together to put an end to the disorders that threatened society and everyone's existence.” The editor finished his reporting with a call to arms: “Honor and glory to whoever arms himself for the salvation of the Patria and for the conservation of the lawful Constitution.”<sup>9</sup> The conservative *Verdadeiro Patriota* relayed a similar message of disrupted celebrations. “A multitude of perhaps twenty thousand people,” the editor wrote, “took to the streets with more than two hundred on horseback accompanying the coach that carried His Imperial Majesty.”<sup>10</sup> This image is reminiscent of the conservative editors’ reporting of civic rituals detailed in an earlier chapter. In Pedro's personal style of government, a visible public was necessary to complete the picture of Pedro's connection to the people. The larger the crowd

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<sup>8</sup>*Moderador*, 16 March 1831, #83.

<sup>9</sup>*Moderador*, 16 March 1831, #83.

<sup>10</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 18 March 1831, #42.



the better, and the conservative editors used every opportunity to discuss the gracious, peaceful, and passive crowds that cheered on Pedro's every action.

The liberal press had a rather different view of events. The initial reaction was one of shock and disbelief. Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* opened his discussion with “I do not know what to write; the pain suffocates me.” By all accounts, the liberal groups fared badly in the riots, repulsed by the better-organized and better-armed conservatives over several nights. Realizing the futility of violent action, the liberal editors used the press as their main weapon to attack Pedro's supporters in the aftermath of the riot. Even though the editor of the *República* did not know what to write, he also felt it was his duty to “remind the tyrants that Brazil will be reduced to ashes before it will be enslaved.”<sup>11</sup>

### ***Editors as Actors***

Numerous eyewitnesses to the riot reported hearing shouts of “Death to the *República*” and “Death to the *Tribuna*,” the two most radical liberal newspapers. Liberal editors were on the streets acting in the riot. It was common for the opposition leaders to attack and be attacked rhetorically through the mechanism of the press; now, the battle in the press spilled over into the streets. Editors on both sides never shied from a fight in the press, and they were quick to exchange their rhetorical weapons for physical ones. In the natural and inevitable placing of blame that followed the riots, editors on both sides highlighted the role their counterparts had played in both the rhetorical and physical battle for control of the streets.

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<sup>11</sup>*República*, 16 March 1831, #47.

The conservatives placed blame squarely on the liberal newspaper editors. Through their discussion in the press the liberal editors “incited people against people—Brazilians against Brazilians.”<sup>12</sup> The *Verdadeiro Patriota* saw a logical connection between radical newspapers like the *Tribuna do Povo* and the violence in the streets. Indeed, according to this conservative editor, the *Tribuna* was “nothing less than revolution personified, breathing through the press.”<sup>13</sup> In their reporting of the riot, the “tribunes of the people, the orators and scribes who daily guide the crowds, threw oil and perfume on the open wounds.”<sup>14</sup> Even though by all accounts the editor of the *Aurora Fluminense* was not involved in the physical fighting, the *Novo Censor* saw his hand in starting the riots. According to this editor, the Brazilian youths fighting in the streets all belonged to the “new school of the *Aurorista*.”<sup>15</sup> The printed defense of the commercial corps also invoked the invisible hand of the *Aurora* when the author referred to a group of youths as “*aurorinos*.”<sup>16</sup>

Even though he had no physical role in the violence in the streets, Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga of the *Aurora Fluminense* was singled out by the aggressors for particular attack. During the riot, Evaristo's house on Pescadores street was surrounded by a large, hostile group. Their ostensible reason for choosing Evaristo's house was that the occupant had not illuminated his windows to celebrate the return of Pedro. However, Evaristo pointed out that during the first two nights of the riot, no houses in his neighborhood had been illuminated. It

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<sup>12</sup>*Novo Censor*, 23 March 1831, #10.

<sup>13</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 1 April 1831, #45.

<sup>14</sup>*Quem Tem Rasão? ou analyse das desordens dos dias 12 e 13, com reflexes, e conselhos, pelo Capitão Mor da Ilha dos Ratos*, (Rio: Ogier, [24 March] 1831), n/p.

<sup>15</sup>*Novo Censor*, 19 March 1831, #9.

<sup>16</sup>*Hum Verdadeiro Constitucional, Defeza, ou Fiel, e Verdadeira Exposição dos Acontecimentos, que tiverão Lugar no Rio de Janeiro por Occasião da Chegada SS.MM.II. as Noites de 11 a 15 de Março. Que ao Respeitavel Corpo do Commercio, offerece*, (Rio: Tipographia do Diario, 1831).

was only on the third that, “either out of terror or imitation,” a few windows were lit.

Evaristo refused to illuminate his windows because “these illuminations by the parasites of the palace are false indicators that the people are very content.” “We will not take part,” the editor continued, “in a treason so manifest against our Emperor and against Brazil.”<sup>17</sup>

Thwarted by the shuttered windows of Evaristo's house, the attackers, who now numbered around six hundred, moved on to the Rocío. There they attacked the known liberal hangouts of Juvencio Pereira Ferreira's pharmacy and Silvino Jose de Almeida's bookstore, breaking all the windows and shouting “Death to the *Cabras* [half-breeds].”<sup>18</sup> It was no wonder that Evaristo would write in the next edition of his newspaper: “The violent attacks have succeeded one after another; no Brazilian is safe. The city of Rio de Janeiro is now uninhabitable.”<sup>19</sup>

Beyond finding blame in the liberal newspapers' ideas, conservative editors also highlighted the personal role the liberal editors had in provoking and leading the rioters. The *Novo Censor* believed Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* appeared to be the “Chief of the Cabal.”<sup>20</sup> The author of the defense of the commercial corps also reported that on 13 March, on Quitanda street at the corner of São Pedro, there was a group of youths “captained by the

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<sup>17</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 16 March 1831, #462. See also Octávio Tarquínio de Sousa, *Evaristo da Veiga*, (São Paulo: Editora Itatiaia Limitada, 1988), 86-87.

<sup>18</sup>Both of these locations had strong connections to the opposition. Silvino sold liberal (and conservative) newspapers and Ribeiro claims Juvencio's pharmacy was the base of operations for the liberals during the riot. Ribeiro, *A Liberdade em Construção*, 16. According to the *Devassa*, Silvino was a *pardo*, though as we will see later, the epithet of *cabra* did not solely denote a person of mixed-race descent. Also note that in 1831 Rio de Janeiro windows were a very expensive but necessary part of a bookseller's shop. Breaking all the windows was an economic as well as a physical attack. See the *Devassa* testimony of Juvencio Perreira Ferreira, Silvino Jose de Almeida, and Joze Teity Jardim in *Traslado do Processo aqui deu motivo os Tumultos das Garrafadas do dia 13, 14, 15 de Março de 1831*. Biblioteca Nacional Sala dos Manuscritos. Also see *Nova Luz Brasileira*, 18 March 1831, #127.

<sup>19</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 18 March 1831, #463.

<sup>20</sup>*Novo Censor*, 30 March 1831, #12.

despicable boy of the *República*.”<sup>21</sup> Even more disconcerting, the *Novo Censor* reported a rumor that the editor of the *República* was freeing slaves. This was just a rumor, he assured his readers, designed to instill fear in the minority white population of Rio de Janeiro.<sup>22</sup>

The historical record supports the conservative accusations. Numerous eyewitnesses reported seeing the editor of the *República* leading a large group of people through the streets of Ouvidor and Direita, shouting vivas to the constitution, the assembly, and the liberty of the press. One townsman reported seeing the editors of the *República* and the *Tribuna* marching at the head of a great column toward Quitanda street. Once the editors reached Quitanda, bottles rained down on them from the windows above.<sup>23</sup> As an indicator of the personal nature of the press and the identification of the editors with their ideas, many eyewitnesses reported hearing shouts of “Death to the *República*.” The conservative editors admitted that in the midst of the immense concourse of people, one or two revelers might have shouted “Death to the *República*.” It was a shame that had happened, according to the editor of the *Verdadeiro Patriota*, even though “no one desires more than we to see this writer castigated, destined [as he was] to attack the Inviolable and Sacred Person of the Emperor.”<sup>24</sup>

Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* boasted that he was indeed personally involved in the street fighting of the riot. In his self-serving autobiography, the editor wrote:

The fight was personal. On the side of the Portuguese party was Pedro I. On the side of the Brazilian party was the *República*, or Borgês da Fonseca. In the end the Emperor fought with me personally, as if to kill me would annihilate the Brazilian party. The Fluminenses wanted me to lead them

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<sup>21</sup>Hum Verdadeiro Constitucional, *Defeza*.

<sup>22</sup>*Novo Censor*, 30 March 1831, #12.

<sup>23</sup>*Traslado do Processo*.

<sup>24</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 18 March 1831, #42.

through the streets illuminated in honor of the Emperor; they put me at the front of a considerable number of citizens.<sup>25</sup>

His personal involvement gave credence to his continual call to Brazilians to take up arms against their perceived attackers. “We have enough words,” he wrote in late March, “we need works.”<sup>26</sup>

Several liberal authors saw the repeated shouts of “Death to the *República*” juxtaposed with vivas to Pedro as presenting an ironic twist to the political debate. The *Aurora Fluminense* commented on the “contrast made between who is on the top step of the political ladder and a young journalist whose only importance is his periodical and his courage.”<sup>27</sup> The *Voz Fluminense* dryly agreed: “What a marvelous contrast! Does the *República* aspire to the throne of Brazil?”<sup>28</sup> By focusing on the *República* as the main enemy and the exact opposite of the emperor, the conservatives clearly identified the role of the liberal newspaper editors in fomenting the riot.

Just as the conservatives singled out the role of the liberal editors in personally leading the rioters, the liberals were quick to point to the actions of the conservative editors. The editor of the *República* reported that on 13 March he was walking “in good order without offending anyone” among the illuminations to celebrate Pedro's return. On Quitanda street, between the streets of São Pedro and Violas, he was “provoked by Padre Malheiros, editor of the *Novo Censor*, who gave ‘Vivas to His Absolute Majesty’.” The *República* responded with “Vivas to His *Constitutional* Majesty.” A fracas ensued. Meanwhile, the

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<sup>25</sup> Antonio Borgês da Fonseca, *Manifesto Politico, Apontamentos de Minha Vida Politica e da Vida Politica do Dr. Urbano Sabino Pessoa de Melo*, (Recife: Typ. Commercial de G. H. de Mira, 1867).

<sup>26</sup> *República*, 30 March 1831, #51.

<sup>27</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 16 March 1831, #462.

<sup>28</sup> *Voz Fluminense*, 19 March 1831, #148.

shops were filled with bystanders shouting “Vivas to the Absolute Emperor” and “Death to the *República*.”<sup>29</sup> The *Aurora Fluminense* also reported the participation of the conservative editor in the riot: “We had hoped that the *Novo Censor*, whose writer was one of the principal actors in the tragedies of 13 and 14 [March], would give a narration of all that happened.” Instead he painted the events “in false colors of a man of a party, of an agent of an anti-Brazilian cabal.”<sup>30</sup> Finally, in his “List of the Cannibals who drove the massacre against the Fluminenses,” the editor of the *Voz Fluminense* listed the clerks of several Portuguese businesses, the commercial corps, and Padre Malheiros, editor of the *Novo Censor*.<sup>31</sup>

Beyond physical involvement, liberal editors also blamed the conservatives for being mouthpieces of the effort to usurp the constitution and install an absolutist monarch. The *Nova Luz Brasileira* noted that “the plans of absolutism still continue because after the [appearance of the proclamation] appeared the infamous *Despertador*, the *Novo Censor*, and the defense of the commercial corps.”<sup>32</sup> “Infamous salaried Portuguese writers,” wrote the *Astrea*, “publish among us periodicals whose doctrines indicate to us the intentions of their Patrons.”<sup>33</sup> In all printed material in the court, including the proclamation, the conservative newspapers, and pamphlets from citizens, the liberals saw a conspiracy to limit the powers of the constitution and install an absolute monarchy.

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<sup>29</sup>*República*, 16 March 1831, #47.

<sup>30</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 21 March 1831, #464.

<sup>31</sup>*Voz Fluminense*, 23 March 1831, #49.

<sup>32</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 25 March 1831, #129. It is unclear what this editor means by the *Despertador*. No newspaper title by that name is listed in the standard records of newspapers of the period. See Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, *Catálogo de Periódicos Brasileiros Microfilmados*, (Rio: Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, 1994).

<sup>33</sup>*Astrea*, 17 March 1831, #683.

The conspiracy, according to the liberal editors, extended far beyond the conservative editors to include Portuguese townspeople and even the emperor himself. A key element of the conspiracy was a certain man named Soares, who many eyewitnesses claimed instigated the riots. One bystander reported that Soares led the shouts of “Death to the *República*” and organized the people throwing bottles from upper-story windows. Another onlooker reported that Soares was the instigator and also reported hearing him shout “Death to the *República*” and “Death to the *Tribuna*.” Finally, two observers saw someone, apparently Soares, throwing bottles from windows facing Quitanda street. Some of the bottles were filled with Agua Raz (a corrosive liquid) and others with black ink.<sup>34</sup> This damaging information was compounded when the *Aurora Fluminense* reported Soares worked as a guard in the customs house.<sup>35</sup> The police moved too slowly, in the eyes of the liberal editors, and concentrated their attention after the riot on liberal-leaning members of the military. The fact that Soares was a government employee coupled with the inactivity of the police deepened the impression that the attackers were “clearly protected by the government and its subaltern authorities.”<sup>36</sup>

The conspiracy theories did not end there. The liberal editors believed the attackers were too well organized, too well equipped, to have acted independently. The groups that attacked the Brazilians marching in the streets were “agitated without doubt by an invisible hand.”<sup>37</sup> One does not have to look far to see where the liberal editors were heading. The *Nova Luz Brasileira* reported a rumor “to the effect that Pedro is the defender of the *pés de*

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<sup>34</sup>*Traslado do Processo*.

<sup>35</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 18 March 1831, #463.

<sup>36</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 18 March 1831, #463.

<sup>37</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 16 March 1831, #462.

*chumbo* [derogative term for Portuguese], but this rumor has been rejected by the majority of Brazilians.”<sup>38</sup> Always more obvious than most, Borgês da Fonseca of the *Repúblico* saw Pedro's direct involvement in the riot. He wrote that Pedro returned to his palace in São Christovão, where he “ordered the massacre to begin on the day of his triumphal entrance.” On 13 March, according to the radical editor, the emperor was on Quitanda street, staying in the house of the Portuguese businessman Domingues Guimarães.<sup>39</sup> Many eyewitnesses reported hearing a gunshot from Quitanda street that apparently signaled the commencement of the riot. That shot, implied many liberal editors, came from the gun of the Emperor.

Implying the emperor had a hand in the street fighting indicated a significant change in public statements about Pedro. An earlier chapter detailed how the liberal editors continued to describe Pedro as their ultimate protector and as a father figure. Now, these same editors were beginning to depict him as the source of all their suffering. The most persistent shouts given by the liberal groups were to the sovereign Brazilian nation—a clear connection to the earlier debate over the sovereignty of the emperor versus the sovereignty of the nation. This distinction was not lost on the conservative editors: “Above all we see that the Inviolability that the Constitution gives [the Emperor] has been lost, that the despotic press has vomited on him more insults than any other monarch has suffered.”<sup>40</sup> The more subtle liberal editors noted that “the festivals to Independence and Constitution [were] celebrated by Brazilians, and those made to the *person* of the Emperor were celebrated by the

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<sup>38</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 18 March 1831, #127.

<sup>39</sup>Borgês da Fonseca, *Manifesto Politico*. Sodrê has Pedro staying at the house on Quitanda as well, though his unnamed source may well be Fonseca. Nelson Werneck Sodrê, *História da Imprensa no Brasil*, (Rio: MAUAD, 1999), 119.

<sup>40</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 29 March 1831, #44.



Portuguese.”<sup>41</sup> The never subtle *Repúblico* claimed the anti-Brazilian faction was led by “crowned burglars.”<sup>42</sup>

The liberal and conservative editors personalized politics through their various roles in the riot of the Nights of the Broken Bottles. They led their constituents through both written analysis and physical action. Their personal participation in the events of late March 1831 served as an example to their reading and listening publics. Politics mattered, and the editors were not afraid to back up their abstract ideas with concrete action.

### ***The Press as Site for Debate***

While editors on both sides played various roles in the riot, it was the continuing debates in the newspapers that placed the editors in the position to both guide and be blamed for the turmoil of the end of the First Empire. By the end of the First Empire, the press had taken on a vital role in shaping political events. Pedro had recognized early the danger of the opposition newspapers. In his speech from the throne to open the legislature in May 1830, he protested that “the ignorance and maliciousness of certain authors propagate anarchy.”<sup>43</sup> The newspapers provided a vehicle for information that included new participants in the political debates and discussions. The forum provided by the press introduced politics to those unaccustomed to the functioning of the state. This role is highlighted most clearly in the proclamation given by Pedro to the Mineiros and the “official” response of the opposition.

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<sup>41</sup>Emphasis is mine. *Voz Fluminense*, 19 March 1831, #148.

<sup>42</sup>*Repúblico*, 30 March 1831, #51.

<sup>43</sup>Printed in *Brasileiro Imparcial*, 18 May 1830, #38.

The proclamation given by Pedro in Ouro Preto on 22 February was an official document of the state, even though it did not follow the trajectory of an ordinary proclamation. Normally, one of Pedro's ministers would write an edict or proclamation and the national printing office would publish a set number of copies. The government daily would publish it, and the superintendent of police would affix copies to church doors and other meeting places. The proclamation to the Mineiros was given in a radically different form; the first time it appeared in Rio was via the opposition press. Pedro's use of this medium shows that the emperor understood the role that the press had undertaken. Pedro recognized that newspapers had become the medium of political expression and did not ignore the reach and influence the press had achieved. Instead, he used the press to attack the press.

It was clear that the emperor was aware of the efforts of the liberal editors to motivate the populace to act against his government. The main purpose of the proclamation was to identify a revolutionary current in Rio de Janeiro that threatened the stability of Pedro's government, but how Pedro chose to convey that idea shows us how much he was aware of current political debates in the newspapers. He argued that opposition editors “write without disguise, and excite the people to federation.”<sup>44</sup> The reference to federalism was directed toward the *Tribuna do Povo* whose editor constantly argued for the need for a Brazilian federation. While the concept of federation never moved beyond the confines of a few newspapers, Pedro obviously was aware that the concept was being debated and also understood it as a direct challenge to his authority.

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<sup>44</sup>See appendix 1 for the full text of the proclamation.

The liberals knew immediately that the proclamation was directed against them. The *Aurora Fluminense* intoned that “His Majesty appears to place the blame for all the disorders that threaten us on the excesses of the press.”<sup>45</sup> When the conservative *Moderador* concurred that the radical press was responsible for discrediting Brazil's government, the *Aurora* shot back: “the Government discredits itself by its deeds.”<sup>46</sup> The *Repúblico* voiced the feelings of many of the liberal authors with the short statement, “Tyranny always wants to suffocate the free press.”<sup>47</sup>

Continuing his attack against the liberal editors, Pedro informed his audience that “there exists a disorganizing party, who, availing themselves of the purely peculiar circumstances of France” wanted to emulate the successes of the July Revolution. Pedro obviously was aware of the newspapers' discussion of Charles X and wanted to avoid his fate. In their responses to the proclamation, the liberal editors in Rio embraced the connection to the revolutionaries of France. “Who said to the adulators who wrote the Proclamation,” wrote the radical editor of the *Tribuna do Povo*, “that the circumstances of France have no relation with Brazil?”<sup>48</sup> The *Aurora Fluminense* wrote matter-of-factly that “the French established a constitutional monarchy [and] resisted tyranny.” To clarify the connection, the editor continued that “resistance to oppression is a right given to the Brazilian citizenry by the criminal code.”<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 11 March 1830, #460.

<sup>46</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 14 March 1830, #461.

<sup>47</sup> *Repúblico*, 12 March 1831, #46.

<sup>48</sup> *Tribuna do Povo*, 14 March 1831, #21.

<sup>49</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 14 March 1831, #461.

According to Pedro, the most dangerous editors were those who “try to deceive [the public] with the invectives against my inviolable and sacred person.” Obviously, this remark was directed to the ongoing discussion over the legitimacy of the monarch and over who was sovereign, the emperor or the nation. As the numbers of liberal newspapers increased and the number of liberty of the press court cases decreased, the political culture of Rio consistently moved away from the European concept of the divine right of kings. The fall of the absolutist Charles X in France and the acclamation of his successor the “Citizen-King” gave the liberals of Rio a contemporary example from which to draw the rhetoric for their definition of monarchy. In another sign of Pedro's impatience with the political climate of the court city, the emperor construed attacks against his person as attacks against the state. The liberals attacked his person “for the purpose of enacting in Brazil scenes of horror, covering it with misery.”

Pedro characterized the opposition editors as a “disorganizing party.” Brazil had no official political parties at this point; it would not be until the late 1830s that the first party, the Conservative party, would be established.<sup>50</sup> The negative association of parties was common to conservative editors in late 1830 and early 1831. When discussing liberal newspapers, the *Novo Censor* complained about the “revolutionary clubs [that] spread illusion, fraud, and lies to the last corner of the Empire.”<sup>51</sup> Some liberal editors resented the conservatives who saw on every street corner “greater clubs, lesser clubs, and clubs of patricidal federalists.”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Needell, Jeffrey D. “Party Formation and State-Making: The Conservative Party and the Reconstruction of the Brazilian State, 1831-1840,” *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 81 no.2, (2001); José Murilo de Carvalho, *A Construção da Ordem: A Elite Política Imperial*, (Rio: Relume Dumará, 1996).

<sup>51</sup>*Novo Censor*, 19 March 1831, #9.

<sup>52</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 28 March 1831, #466.

As we have seen, liberal newspapers were not above using conspiracy theories to push their own agendas. Beginning in 1829, it was common to find references to Pedro's "Secret Cabinet." Often, the most outrageous of the liberal pundits would merely refer to the "IGS," *Infernal Gabinete Secreto*. This cabinet was supposedly comprised of several of Pedro's cronies who acted independently of the legislature and even Pedro's ministers. For most of Pedro's reign, he was guided by the counsel of a man popularly called the Buffoon. *O Chalaça*, actually Francisco Gomes da Silva, was a young Portuguese immigrant serving in the Brazilian army when he became Pedro's confidant. For much of the late 1820s, whenever Pedro made a questionable political move, the liberal opposition railed against *O Chalaça* and saw in his relationship with Pedro another example of the emperor's cronyism and favoritism toward Portugal. Rancor focused against *O Chalaça* reached its apex in early 1830 when Pedro's confidant accused Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga of the *Aurora Fluminense* of slander. The journalist's acquittal was another example of how far the mood of Rio de Janeiro had moved away from deference and blind obedience to the monarch. Pedro was forced to send *O Chalaça* to Europe as a kind of informal diplomat.<sup>53</sup>

*O Chalaça's* exile did not prevent the liberal newspapers from seeing the hand of the secret cabinet in the drafting of the proclamation. Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* called on Pedro to discard his cronies since "they deceive you when they convince you that there exists in Brazil [a party] that has interests opposed to the constitutional throne." The editor found it shocking that "our *dear* Emperor" signed such an "illegal, unconstitutional, and impolitic" proclamation. In a backhanded defense of the emperor, Borgês da Fonseca

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<sup>53</sup>Neill Macaulay, *Dom Pedro: The Struggle for Liberty in Brazil and Portugal, 1798-1834*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1986), 238. The assignment did not stop *O Chalaça* from making his voice heard. In early 1831, *O Chalaça's* book-length defense of his actions appeared in London. Conselheiro Francisco Gomes da Silva, *Memorias Offerecidas á Nação Brasileira*, (Rio de Janeiro: Zelio Valverde, 1939 [1831]).

continued, “all know that the Emperor is a null entity and that all the evil comes from his Ministers.”<sup>54</sup> The *Nova Luz Brasileira* stated definitively that it was not “the Chief of the Executive Power [who wrote] to the people.”<sup>55</sup> He could not have, according to the *Tribuno*, because “Pedro I is our friend.”<sup>56</sup> Whether wishful thinking or ruefully tongue-in-cheek, the *Tribuno's* remark was characteristic of the liberals' effort to retain confidence in the leader they had earlier portrayed as their protector.

While most editors still showed a lingering attachment to the emperor, the growing distrust in him led the liberal editors to cast doubts upon Pedro's reason for traveling to Minas and the purpose of the proclamation. While a plausible reason for Pedro's voyage was simply to escape the increasingly hostile environment of the city, the liberal editors came to see more dark reasons for Pedro's trip. The *Aurora Fluminense* believed Pedro may have traveled to Minas to “establish a stronghold against the rebels or to march on them at the front of the faithful Mineiros.”<sup>57</sup> Pedro intended to “proselytize” to the Minerios and “calculate the opposition of Minas to absolutism.”<sup>58</sup> The *Voz Fluminense* echoed this sentiment: “supposedly defending the Constitution, [Pedro] tried to enlist [the Mineiros] under the black standard of tyranny against the Empire of Liberty.”<sup>59</sup> Whatever the specific

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<sup>54</sup>Emphasis in original. Dear is a Portuguese play on words. *Caro* can be both a term of endearment and an adjective describing something of high cost. *Repúblico*, 12 March 1831, #46.

<sup>55</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 15 March 1831, #126.

<sup>56</sup>*Tribuno do Povo*, 14 March 1831, #21.

<sup>57</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 11 March 1831, #460.

<sup>58</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 25 March 1831, #129.

<sup>59</sup>*Voz Fluminense*, 12 March 1831, #147.

reason, it was abundantly clear to the opposition editors of Rio that the “trip had political ends, and His Majesty does not have confidence in the good people of Rio de Janeiro.”<sup>60</sup>

The editors made the connection between the proclamation and the riot clear for their readers. In the hindsight of the editors, it was no surprise that the riot happened “two days after the appearance of the anarchic proclamation of 22 February.” “This proclamation was the thunderclap that announced the horrific storm of the nights 12, 13, 14, and 15,” reported the editor of the *Voz Fluminense*.<sup>61</sup> The *Nova Luz* concurred: “it is unquestionable that this anti-Brazilian document served as the signal of the massacre.”<sup>62</sup> Almost all the liberal newspapers printed some form of the claim “the last events are the necessary consequences of the revolutionary Proclamation.”<sup>63</sup> Some even addressed their discussion directly to the emperor: the date that the proclamation was given was the “day that began the hostilities against my Patria, Senhor.”<sup>64</sup> In a veiled attack against Pedro, the *República* wrote “the monster, the traitor, who wrote it should be rigorously punished for deluding the Emperor into signing it.”<sup>65</sup> The *Tribuna do Povo* reported “it was not for nothing that the periodicals of opposition clamored against the Proclamation of Dom Pedro when it appeared; well they

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<sup>60</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 11 March 1831, #460.

<sup>61</sup>*Voz Fluminense*, 19 March 1831, #148.

<sup>62</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 25 March 1831, #129.

<sup>63</sup>*Tribuna do Povo*, 21 March 1831, #23. Some of the varieties of the comments include “we say that it attacked many times the Constitution, the Sovereign rights of the People and the Independence of the Justices.” *Nova Luz Brasileira*, 22 March 1831, #128; “today we see a document incendiary and unconstitutional that, under the title Proclamation to the Mineiros, has thus sown throughout the Empire the seed of discord and given body to this monstrous part that has been and continues to be the only disorganizer of established Institutions.” *Brasileiro Offendido*, 26 March 1831, #1; “Senhor, this Proclamation was the origin of the insults that today the Portuguese make to us.” *Tribuna do Povo*, 31 March 1831, #26.

<sup>64</sup>*Tribuna do Povo*, 31 March 1831, #26.

<sup>65</sup>*República*, 21 March 1831, #48.

knew that this Proclamation was the signal given to the Portuguese to attack the patient *cabras*.”<sup>66</sup>

The liberals had good reason to warn their readers that the proclamation was a call to arms. Pedro ended the proclamation with a plea to his supporters to actively defend his position: “Help me then to sustain the Constitution as it exists, and as we have sworn to it. I will rely on you; you can rely on me.” This call came none too soon for Pedro's conservative supporters in Rio. Just before the arrival of the proclamation in Rio, the ultra conservative *Novo Censor* tried to goad the people into action:

Brazilians, we are near the days of terror! To arms Brazilians, against those who agitate against the Constitution, against the Emperor, against the Dynasty, against Religion, against God, and against the tranquility of the People. To arms Brazilians, against the enemies of the Patria.<sup>67</sup>

The same editor applauded the proclamation as an “antidote to the corrosive venom” of the radical press. Taking the call to arms to a new level, the editor exhorted Pedro to “Save the nation, secure the throne, cleanse the Empire of these vagrants and Demagogues.”<sup>68</sup> Other conservative editors expressed similar support for Pedro and the proclamation, reprinting it in its entirety and discussing it at length. The *Moderador* boasted that the Rio press had reproduced over a thousand copies of the proclamation for distribution.<sup>69</sup>

The liberal editors believed Pedro singled them out for particular attack and made the battle between the government and the opposition a personal struggle between the emperor and the liberal press. It was unquestionable to the liberal editors that Pedro was personally

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<sup>66</sup>*Tribuna do Povo*, 31 March 1831, #26.

<sup>67</sup>*Novo Censor*, 9 March 1831, #6.

<sup>68</sup>*Novo Censor*, 12 March 1831, #7.

<sup>69</sup>*Moderador*, 12 March 1831, #18. It is unclear whether the proclamation was printed as a standalone broadside or if the editor was referring to editions of the newspapers.



and intrinsically involved in the events of March. From authoring the proclamation to giving the signal to start the riot, Pedro's presence was perceived to be everywhere.

The personal attacks by Pedro warranted a collective response by the liberal newspapers, all of which printed a letter by Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga of the *Aurora* and signed by “representatives of the nation,” namely twenty-three deputies and one senator. The letter detailed attacks against “patriotic victims whose blood was spilled in an aggressive premeditated attack” and announced that “confidence in the government is almost lost.”<sup>70</sup>

The letter shows how the press had become a powerful tool guiding politics in the period. It was written by “officials” but distributed through an unofficial medium. That medium allowed them to act when the legislature was not in session. This point was not lost on the editor of the *Novo Censor* who wrote in an eight-page commentary that the “unconstitutional” letter “perturbed the peace.” A correspondent in the same edition wondered whether “writing the *Aurora*” makes Evaristo “a national representative.”<sup>71</sup> The representatives of the nation made sure to sign their names, a common practice when the letter writer's honor was at stake. Immediately after the riot, both the editors of the *Nova Luz Brasileira* and the *República* signed their names to letters directed toward Pedro. Their message was personal; they wanted to let their readers know they stood behind their writing and were not afraid of recrimination.

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<sup>70</sup>The letter first appeared in the *Aurora Fluminense*, 18 March 1831, #463, and was reprinted in almost all the liberal newspapers.

<sup>71</sup>*Novo Censor*, 23 March 1831, #10. Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga was a Deputy from Minas Gerais. The author was making the point that since the legislature was out of session, the deputies did not have the authority to call themselves representatives of the nation. The letter from the representatives was part of an established practice of publishing letters in the press addressed to Pedro. After the riot, such letters became especially frequent. Most called on him to protect them from their attackers or from “anti-Brazilian” ministers. *Astrea*, 22 March 1831, #684.

The printing and discussion of the proclamation and the letter from the representatives in the newspapers show how vital the press had become as a site for debate and a medium of both official and unofficial political discussion. The discussion of political issues had moved beyond the confines of the state. Both the emperor and the members of the legislature used the press as the favored vehicle for political pronouncements. Consequently, now all in listening range of the numerous bookstores and sidewalk pulpits were privy to a level of political interaction hitherto inaccessible. The interpretations of the editors colored events for their readers and helped undermine confidence in the government.

### ***Making Politics Matter***

To incorporate new actors in the political arena and be an effective forum for debate, the press had to popularize politics. The press had to make politics matter to the everyday reader or listener. To do this, the editors used familiar words, images, and concepts to instill the political discussion with meaning. Their informal language, use of national symbols, and adoption of racial categorizations helped frame their arguments and clearly delineate the two sides in the debate. The editors understood that their role extended beyond informers to be motivators and instigators. Therefore, they placed the arguments within a context their reading and listening public could easily understand and identify with: nativism.

The main tool used by the newspapers to identify with the reading public was obviously words themselves. The letter from the representatives of the nation emphasized “this language, Senhor, is frank and loyal.” In a more descriptive passage in a different letter, the *Tribuna do Povo* wrote: “Listen to me with attention, Senhor. My language is

rough, it is not of the palaces, but it is what is used in the simple and virtuous homes of free Citizens; it is the language of reason, the Brazilian language.”<sup>72</sup> Language had become a political tool used by the opposition to imply a connection to the people; editors claimed they spoke the same language as the common man.

Editors also touted other markers of Brazilian-ness, such as the national band, sometimes called the cockade, *laço*, or *tope*. This was a band of cloth, worn either around the upper arm or on the brim of a hat, first used in the independence movement of 1822. After the minor street disturbances that followed the celebration of 25 March 1830, the *Nova Luz Brasileira* urged its readers to re-adopt the armband: “It is the obligation of all the Brazilians to wear their distinctive band, principally in the present epoch.”<sup>73</sup> The armbands originated as marks to differentiate patriotic Brazilians from Old World Portuguese. Encouraging their use at the end of the First Empire, well after the struggle for independence was won, meant that “all the ancient odium and rivalry against the Portuguese [was] revived.”<sup>74</sup> The traditional armbands displayed a yellow chevron topped by a green rosette, though the conservative interpreters claimed seeing “bands of a different color than adopted by law on the hats of a certain class of the population as a signal of seditious reunions.”<sup>75</sup> The more dangerous “Federalist” band was “composed of a yellow flower called 'always blooming,' with a green bud in the center.”<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>*Tribuno do Povo*, 31 March 1831, #26.

<sup>73</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileiro*, 16 April 1830, #37. See Chapter IV above for a further discussion of the disturbances.

<sup>74</sup>John Armitage, *The History of Brazil* (NY: AMS Press, 1970 [1836]), vol. 2, 115.

<sup>75</sup>Ernst Ebel, *O Rio de Janeiro e Seus Arredores em 1824*, Joaquim de Sousa Leão Filho trans. (SP: Companhia Ed. Nacional, 1972), 10. *Moderador*, 16 March 1831, #83.

<sup>76</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 18 March 1831, #42.

Liberal editors endorsed the national band as a flag of defiance in the face of the better armed and organized conservative groups. “The least insult,” wrote the *Astrea*, “to the national *laço* will be punished with the utmost energy on our part.”<sup>77</sup> The Portuguese groups did indeed insult the national band at every opportunity. A correspondent in the *Astrea* who called himself “A Brazilian wounded in the heart” wrote “the National *laço* has been torn from our hats and trampled underfoot!”<sup>78</sup> Terming the national band a symbol of federalism was also perceived of as an attack against the liberals. A correspondent termed those who saw the national band as distinctive of federalism “vile clerks.”<sup>79</sup> Evaristo of the *Aurora Fluminense* also took offense at the connotation. When a young man “from the country” was attacked by two men, supposedly at the behest of the police, for wearing the national band, the aggressors called him a federalist and severely beat him. Since the band was sanctioned by the government and Pedro had even worn it in 1822, this editor did not know why the “owners of our land have baptized [the national band] with the name *laço de federação*.”<sup>80</sup> A more significant slight was the mocking adoption of the band by the Portuguese combatants. An incensed *Aurora Fluminense* wrote:

We are informed that many Portuguese, who arrived in Brazil after Independence, appear with the Brazilian cockade, among them Sr. Soares. It appears that Portuguese residents should wear the cockade of their own nation to avoid confusion. Nothing is more scandalous than to see foreigners from Portugal interfere in our political concerns, use insulting language, and

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<sup>77</sup> *Astrea*, 17 March 1831, #683.

<sup>78</sup> *Astrea*, 17 March 1831, #683.

<sup>79</sup> *Astrea*, 24 March 1831, #685.

<sup>80</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 18 March 1831, #463; *Aurora Fluminense*, 28 March 1831, #466. See Ribeiro for a discussion of the national band in the Brazil's movement for independence, *A Liberdade em Construção*, 248-249.

maltreat inhabitants [of Brazil], and two days later place in their hats the Brazilian cockade by way of mockery.<sup>81</sup>

Insults and mockery from the Portuguese did not stop the liberal editors from exhorting Brazilians to wear the band at every opportunity: “your sons, your spouses, should present themselves in Public with this” band, wrote the *Tribuno do Povo*.<sup>82</sup> The “war of the *laço*,” as one editor termed it, became a rallying point to promote anti-Portuguese sentiment.<sup>83</sup>

Liberal editors also helped make straw hats a sign of Brazilian identity. In his report of the celebration to mark the anniversary of the constitution, the editor of the *Brasileiro Offendido* noted that “people lined the streets with hats of straw ornated with the national *laço*.”<sup>84</sup> It appears that “Sr. Caetano Luiz de Araujo, administrator of the mail, prohibited two employees of his department entrance with hats of Brazilian straw, manufactured by a Brazilian citizen.”<sup>85</sup> Rio de Janeiro was still very much dependent on foreign-produced finished goods, the importation of which benefited the Portuguese who dominated shipping. Straw hats were made in Brazil, so brazenly adopting a hat of Brazilian manufacture was a statement of economic independence.<sup>86</sup> In addition, straw hats were commonly found in rural Brazil, worn by common Brazilians. Liberal editors immediately interpreted the government official's refusal to let Brazilian employees into the office as an affront to the nation of Brazil. A pamphlet soon appeared detailing the event, the *Astrea* published an article and a

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<sup>81</sup> *Aurora Fluminense*, 28 March 1831, #466.

<sup>82</sup> *Tribuno do Povo*, 24 March 1831, #24.

<sup>83</sup> *Brasileiro Offendido*, 2 April 1831, #3.

<sup>84</sup> *Brasileiro Offendido*, 30 March 1831 #2.

<sup>85</sup> *Astrea*, 29 March 1831, #687.

<sup>86</sup> “Above all it was the fact of their having been made in Brazil.” F. F. dos G. [Francisco Firmino dos Guimaraens] *Exposição ao Publico*, (Rio: Nova Luz, 1831 [30 March 1831]).

letter to the editor about the straw hats, and the minister of the empire opened an investigation into the affair.<sup>87</sup> Signs were everywhere, and the liberal editors missed no chances to identify with their reading public: “we are all wearing the *chapeu de palha* [straw hats], made by our true forefathers, the indigenes.”<sup>88</sup>

Liberal editors were quick to add race to their pantheon of national identity markers. In his reporting of the riot, the conservative editor of the *Novo Censor* claimed that “in the middle of general rejoicing appeared a group of revolutionaries, composed of few white men, mixed with many blacks and some slaves, presided over by the editor of the *República*.”<sup>89</sup> The editor's comments were meant as a racial slur toward the Brazilian forces, and they were also probably a veiled barb at Borgês da Fonseca of the *República*, who was himself of mixed-race descent.<sup>90</sup> The *Aurora Fluminense* fired back that the Brazilians “were not composed of many blacks and few whites, as the *Novo Censor* reports, but of many whites and some pardos.”<sup>91</sup> The *Aurora Fluminense* was in the minority among the liberal newspapers in its squeamishness. Most editors and correspondents actually embraced the epithets thrown at them by the Portuguese. The designation *cabra* [half-breed] became another differentiating signifier for the Brazilians. When a correspondent to the *Aurora* wrote proudly that she was “a woman, Brazilian, and a *cabra*,” she echoed the sentiments of

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<sup>87</sup>The Secretary of the Empire's statement is found in the *Literary Intelligencer*, 7 April 1831, #23, dated 25 March 1831.

<sup>88</sup>*República*, 6 April 1831, #53.

<sup>89</sup>*Novo Censor*, 19 March 1831, #9.

<sup>90</sup>Maria Lúcia de Souza Rangel, *A Atuação Política de um Publicista: Antonio Borgês da Fonseca*, (PUC: Campinas, 1995), 29.

<sup>91</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 21 March 1831, #464.

a growing number of Brazilians who used the attacks by the Portuguese to further define their own identity.<sup>92</sup>

The conservative editors wanted above all to avoid a division of the city along national lines. To this end, they went to great lengths to downplay the categorization of the rioters offered by the liberal press. The *Moderador* complained that the liberal editors “intend to make you believe that this fight is entirely between the adopted Brazilians and the native Brazilians, that is, they want to change the entire question.” “Nothing is more atrocious,” the editor continued, “nothing is more false.”<sup>93</sup> It was in the conservatives' best interests to describe the groups of revelers celebrating the return of Pedro as comprising a very broad cross section of society. The antagonists, in their eyes, were the very few people who “were giving Vivas to Federation and insulting with the epithet of *chumbos* the many Brazilian citizens born across the Atlantic.”<sup>94</sup> In his summation of the riot, the editor of the *Novo Censor* took great pains to clarify that “the fight was not between the native Brazilians and adopted Brazilians but rather between the anarchists of federation and the lovers of our beloved constitution.”<sup>95</sup>

The conservatives had reason to be worried. The liberal newspapers used the racial epithets of the conservatives to begin to craft a national identity. Recalling the independence movement of nine years earlier infused the concept of “Brazilian” and “Portuguese” with real

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<sup>92</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 21 March 1831, #464.

<sup>93</sup>*Moderador*, 16 March 1831, #83. An adopted Brazilian was born in Portugal but had settled permanently in Brazil. Any Portuguese immigrant who had arrived in Brazil before independence and remained after independence was automatically a Brazilian citizen. Those who arrived after independence were not automatically granted citizenship.

<sup>94</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 18 March 1831, #42.

<sup>95</sup>*Novo Censor*, 19 March 1831, #9.

significance. The newspapers helped create an exclusionary concept of the nation that had to be protected from the insults and depredations of those who did not belong. The liberal newspapers were full of claims that the “national honor was attacked” or “national dignity has been wounded.”<sup>96</sup> The liberal press labeled the opposition groups “patriots” who responded to the threats of their attackers “with energy and with *Brasileirismo*.”<sup>97</sup> What the conservatives most wanted to avoid came to fruition when the *República* reported “the events of 13, 14, and 15 March forced the Brazilians into only one party.”<sup>98</sup>

Some liberal editors argued that the affronts to the national honor given by the Portuguese indicated that forced deportation of Portuguese was a real option. As the eyewitness John Armitage reported:

The offence to the nationality, and consequently to the self-love of every Brazilian, united, as though by miracle, individuals of every variety of political creed. Each felt himself insulted, and they joined together in crying that it was necessary that the insolence of the foreigners should be suppressed.<sup>99</sup>

A correspondent of the *Voz Fluminense* wrote “it is necessary for the security of Brazil in general and for the security of the good Portuguese that all those who are not Brazilian citizens are sent out of Rio de Janeiro.”<sup>100</sup> Others believed that deportation might lead to a full-scale civil war. To combat this sentiment, the editor of the *Voz* argued: “this is false,

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<sup>96</sup>*República*, 21 March 1831, #48; *Aurora Fluminense*, 18 March 1831, #463.

<sup>97</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 18 March 1831, #127.

<sup>98</sup>*República*, 25 March 1831, #49.

<sup>99</sup>Armitage, *History of Brazil*, vol. 2, 115.

<sup>100</sup>*Voz Fluminense*, 30 March 1831, #150.



since to exterminate the *Quilombos* of the commercial streets and expel from our country a gang of attackers is not civil war; call it a justified act that all the free nations will bless.”<sup>101</sup>

Liberal editors framed the debate along national lines to demarcate the differing sides and to reinforce a connection to the common Brazilian. The calls for Pedro to replace his pro-Portuguese advisors and ministers with those supportive of Brazilian causes was an effort to direct the emperor's attention to issues that affected the daily life of Brazilians in Rio.<sup>102</sup>

The post-riot political discussion of nationalism was part of a longer debate over where Pedro's interests really lay. As seen in an earlier chapter, the liberal newspapers rejected all Old World political constructions in favor of a uniquely “American” conception of the role of the monarch in the functioning of the state. By reminding the emperor that “your throne is in Brazil, not Portugal, and Brazil is situated in America, not Europe” the liberal editors were calling on Pedro to accept the limited role they had envisioned for him.<sup>103</sup> More importantly

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<sup>101</sup> *Voz Fluminense*, 2 April 1831, #151. A *Quilombo* was a runaway slave community. In this context, the radical editor was using it to mean a group of raiders. Ribeiro notes that the calls for Portuguese deportation increased directly after the abdication and then just as quickly subsided in the face of increasing street violence. She argues that the moderate liberals moved from an anti-Portuguese stance to an inclusive stance to promote their political agendas.

<sup>102</sup> “VMI has been deluded by traitors; you have shown yourself more a Pedro IV than Pedro I. Brazil is for the Brazilians. Convince yourself of this truth and all will be good,” *Repúblico*, 26 March 1831, #50. It is tempting to see evidence for Benedict Anderson's argument that print culture defined a nation through the use of a common vernacular (in opposition to the language of the metropole) and by connecting a wider readership into one “imagined community.” However, in this case the evidence more accurately supports Xavier-François Guerra's point that newspapers entered the nationalism discussion rather late, and they played a significant but hardly defining role in the conception of national identity. For our specific purposes, it is important to note how the liberal editors used the language of nationalism to their advantage by creating an exclusionary concept that needed to be defended. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: Verso, 1991); Xavier-François Guerra, “Forms of Communication, Political Spaces, and Cultural Identities in the Creation of Spanish American Nations,” *Beyond Imagined Communities: Reading and Writing the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America*, Sara Castro-Klarén and John Charles Chasteen, eds., (Washington D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2003). See also John Charles Chasteen “Introduction: Beyond Imagined Communities” in the same volume.

<sup>103</sup> *Tribuna do Povo*, 31 March 1831, #26.

for our purposes, the liberal editors used race as another tactic to popularize their writings and appeal to a broad public base.

In the battle for control of Rio's political center, editors fought in the streets and in the press. To make their messages relevant to the reading and listening populace, the editors went to great lengths to frame their arguments in terms, language, and images familiar to the general public. The newspaper editors were well aware of their role as instigators and motivators. They supplied the interpretations that helped their readers and listeners understand that the political battle was pertinent to their daily concerns and of vital importance to the security and trajectory of the nation.

### ***Network of the Press***

The editors' efforts during and after the riot further expanded the importance of the periodical press. Newspapers had become not only viable means of expressing personal opinions but also vital tools for leveraging public opinion. The role of editors and newspapers in both fomenting and interpreting the riot illuminates two central aspects of the mechanisms of the press. First, the press network was made up of humans. Instead of a formal, professionalized class of journalists who worked for hire and were disconnected to the events they reported, editors in Rio de Janeiro were very much a part of the larger political and social world of the city. Regular citizens wrote the editions, other people printed the editions in one of the several typography houses, and still others distributed the editions to the subscribers and to the pharmacies and bookstores where individual copies were bought and sold. Second, the power wielded by editors in the wake of the riots led to

the publication of several new newspapers. Would-be participants in the informal political process saw the press as a viable means of accessing and informing public opinion.

Each step in the printing process was disrupted during these tumultuous times. Several newspapers suspended publication for several weeks after the riots. The editor of the *Nova Luz Brasileira* explained the absence of his publication by stating “the danger to the Patria that we adore forced us to take up arms along with the Typographer.”<sup>104</sup> On a second occasion the same editor explained that “for lack of employees, we were not able to produce a complete edition today.”<sup>105</sup> While the editor of the *Nova Luz* had trouble completing that particular edition, at other times he and other editors were able to write extended editions. The *Nova Luz* published an eight-page edition directly after the riot, while on two occasions the *Aurora Fluminense* published eight-page editions. The conservative *Novo Censor* also used an eight-page edition to rebut the letter from the representatives of the nation. Besides difficulties in finding people to work in the typography houses, the state of the streets made it difficult to distribute copies. Borgês da Fonseca of the *Repúblico* was forced to add a note in the *Astrea* indicating “the *Marinheiros* [derogatory term for Portuguese] have disrupted the distribution” of his newspaper. If an interested reader wanted his copy of the *Repúblico*, he was forced to pick up a copy in the bookstores of Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga, his brother João Pedro da Veiga, Batista on the Rua da Cadêa, and Silvino on the Praça da Constituição.<sup>106</sup>

The period of crisis also shows us the immediacy and desire for all types of printed materials. In the official report of the riot, one eyewitness testified that “of the tumult and

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<sup>104</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 15 April 1831, #131.

<sup>105</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 22 March 1831, #128.

<sup>106</sup>*Astrea*, 17 March 1831, #683.

disorder of these nights [of the riot] he had no other notices than those obtained by reading the public papers.”<sup>107</sup> By “public papers” this avid reader was probably referring to not only the newspapers, but also the numerous pamphlets and broadsides that sprang up after the riot. Political pamphlets were a major part of the print war during Brazil's independence movement.<sup>108</sup> By mid decade the majority of the few pamphlets published dealt with issues of inheritance and the rights of the clergy. As political events again came to a head in Rio de Janeiro, the number of pamphlets arguing points of politics increased. During the crisis filled weeks of late March and early April, a resident of Rio could read numerous accounts of violence perpetrated in the streets, personal defenses from attacks printed in other pamphlets or journals, and various interpretations of events. The commercial corps’ printed *Defense, or Faithful and True Exposition of Events* was written on 18 March in response to the *Aurora Fluminense's* version of the riot published on 16 March. The *Defense* was available in bookstores on 21 March.<sup>109</sup> In 1830s Brazil news never traveled fast, but in this case the immediacy of the events described ensured the prompt production and distribution of the *Defense*. When employees of the Post Office were refused access to their place of employment because they wore hats of Brazilian manufacture, the *Astrea* printed a complaint one day before a pamphlet appeared detailing the perceived affront to Brazilian honor.<sup>110</sup> Even though I.C.M., the author of another short pamphlet recording the events from the riot to the abdication, had trouble finding a printing shop that was open, he was determined to

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<sup>107</sup>*Traslado do Processo.*

<sup>108</sup>Kirsten Schultz, *Tropical Versailles: Empire, Monarchy, and the Portuguese Royal Court in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1821*, (NY: Routledge, 2001), Isabell Lustosa, *Insultos Impressos: A Guerra dos Jornalistas na Independência 1821-1823*, (SP: Editora Schwarcz, 2000).

<sup>109</sup>Hum Verdadeiro Constitucional, *Defeza*.

<sup>110</sup>*Astrea*, 29 March 1831, #687, *Exposição ao Publico*.

publish his ideas. “The lack of workers for the composition of this paper,” the author wrote, “much less that state of agitation in which we find ourselves, will not impede us from giving our readers a relation of the great events of the past weeks.”<sup>111</sup> While common citizens always had the opportunity to publish letters to the editor in one of Rio's newspapers, many authors were now publishing standalone treatises on political affairs. The newspapers had prepared the way for any literate citizen to use the press as a viable vehicle for political discussion.

To tap into the general interest in events in Rio, several new liberal newspapers started to publish directly after the riots. Their tone was similar; they were shocked at the riots and felt that Pedro was wrong in not protecting the native Brazilians. The editors claimed to feel so strongly about the recent events that they thought it would be remiss if they did not publish their thoughts.<sup>112</sup> The first edition of the *Brasileiro Offendido* related that “we would need to have a frozen heart to continue in apathetic silence, without leaving the field to fight with the pen for Dignity and the Rights of the Nation.”<sup>113</sup> The editor of the *Cartas ao Povo* had a similar view of the need to express his thoughts. “I never thought,” he wrote in his first edition, “that circumstances so imperious would occur that would force me to [publicize] my lack of literary prowess.” Even though he professed no literary talent, he felt compelled to write because “the public calamities and our extreme misery draw from my heart these expressions of pure patriotism.” His object in writing the *Cartas ao Povo* was “to

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<sup>111</sup>I.C.M., *Breve Noticia Sobre a Revolução de Memoravel Dia 7 de Abril 1831*, (Rio: Emile Seignot-Plancher, 1831).

<sup>112</sup>Harline provides a valuable comparison with the Dutch Republic and the sharp rise of pamphlet publication. He found that during periods of national crisis “it was not only proper but had become practically a duty to discuss matters publicly,” Craig E. Harline *Pamphlets, Printing, and Political Culture in the Early Dutch Republic*, (Boston: M. Nijhoff, 1987), 10.

<sup>113</sup>*Brasileiro Offendido*, 21 March 1831, #1.

tell you useful truths, to inform you of the treasons of your enemies, and, without conducting you to the ruinous precipices, to augment your courage, in all your activities, and heat the fire of liberty, and the love for the Patria.” His entire first edition was one long call to the liberal Brazilians to protect their native country. The editor wrote “Compatriots, we have arrived at the end of the evils, and the extremes of misery: honor, glory and national dignity demand our vigilance and our vigor.” He ended with a call to Brazilians: “Do not sleep and never forget your name!!”<sup>114</sup> The arrival of new newspapers did not go unnoticed by the veterans. The *Aurora Fluminense* applauded both the *Brasileiro Offendido* and the *Cartas ao Povo* for drawing “the attention of the Brazilians to the traumas of the recolonizing party and to claim legal vengeance against the attacker of 13 March.”<sup>115</sup>

Pedro, newspaper editors on both sides of the issue, and pamphlet writers all understood the wide reach their publications had throughout Brazil. When Pedro began the proclamation of 22 February with “Mineiros, I will not address myself only to you: the interest is general; I speak therefore to all Brazilians,” he showed that he understood the power of the press and tried to use its national reach to his advantage. Without the mechanism of the press, speaking to all Brazilians was impossible. Likewise, the conservative author of the defense of the commercial corps ended with a note saying “it is for the Provinces that we write these last lines.” “Do not believe,” the author continued, “in the dangerous lies of the revolutionary periodicals.” These “organs of infernal clubs want to steer you into the stormy sea of anarchy.”<sup>116</sup> In a similar effort to paint the radicals in Rio as

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<sup>114</sup>*Cartas ao Povo*, 26 March 1831, #1.

<sup>115</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 30 March 1831, #467. Note the singular “attacker”: a not-so-veiled reference to Pedro’s role in the riot.

<sup>116</sup>*Hum Verdadeiro Constitucional*, *Defeza*.

a dangerous, but isolated, minority the editor of the *Verdadeiro Patriota* opined “there is no other Nation on the planet, excepting France, that spreads from province to province the blasphemies that are currently printed and read.”<sup>117</sup>

The liberal editors did all they could to widen the scope of the riot's significance. Borgês da Fonseca of the *Repúblico* tried to interest the powerful neighboring state of Minas Gerais in the events of Rio by drawing personal connections. The belligerents, he wrote, were “not content with attacking the Deputy Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga, they [also] attacked Batista Caetano de Almeida for wearing the *laço* in his hat, and thus, Mineiros, two of your Deputies were attacked.” The editor then extended his discussion beyond Minas Gerais: “Paulistas, do you not hear the lament of your Fluminense brothers? Prepare yourself. Rio Grandenses, you who love liberty so much, do not be indifferent to our problems.”<sup>118</sup> The liberal editors knew that a newspaper had no impact without readers; nationalizing the struggle gave credence to the editors' claims of being spokesmen for the 'people.'

## ***Conclusion***

The riot of the Nights of the Broken Bottles received its name from the weapons used by the Portuguese assailants as they threw bottles from second-story windows upon Brazilians marching in the streets below. As reported in the *Devassa*, many of these bottles were full of black ink. It is very tempting to read that in either of two ways. First, dousing the Brazilians in black ink could have been used to signify the lack of Brazilian racial purity. Shouts of “Death to the half-breeds!” flew as frequently as bottles during the three main

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<sup>117</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota*, 1 April 1831, #45.

<sup>118</sup>*Repúblico*, 21 March 1831, #48.

nights of the riot. Second, the ink could have been a symbolic denunciation of the vehemence of the press. Editors were attacked with the weapons they used to wage their print war.<sup>119</sup>

However it was, by the end of the First Empire the press had become *the* vehicle for political expression. The head of the government used it to express a political position with the proclamation, and the opposition leaders used it to contest that position. By April 1831, the editors had successfully removed the discussion of politics from the restricted venues of the court and the legislature and made both writing and reading about the direction of the state accessible to all.

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<sup>119</sup>More than likely, the ink was on hand in the business district and made a convenient missile. Also, the economic angle of ruining the clothes of the Brazilian marchers is not too far-fetched.



## CONCLUSION

Pedro I abdicated the throne of Brazil in the early morning hours of 7 April 1831. The response in the press was silence. For five days, no newspapers were published. Every day over the preceding two years saw the publication of three or four newspapers. But for five days in April 1831, there was a complete media blackout.

The reason for the lack of newspapers is obvious: editors were too busy. They were on the streets and in the legislature, celebrating the victory and helping guide the discussions of the future of the state. As the editor of the *Tribuno* noted, “the defense of the Patria took the pen from our hands and replaced it with the sword.”<sup>1</sup> By the end of the First Empire, editors found themselves at the heart of political affairs; it was natural and expected that they would play a physical role in the end of Pedro’s rule.

When the newspapers began printing again, almost all the editors wrote extraordinarily long reports of the abdication. The *Tribuno*’s six-page “Manifest that the editor of the *Tribuno do Povo* sends to the Brazilian nation about the criminal comportment of the ex-Emperor” hit the streets on 14 April. On the next day an eight-page analysis appeared in the *Nova Luz Brasileira* followed by the *Aurora Fluminense*’s six-page report. The *Tribuno do Povo* ended the onslaught of reactions with an eleven-page “Short Narration of the Regenerating Revolution of 7 April 1831.” The reports by the editors were not day-

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<sup>1</sup>*Tribuno do Povo*, 21 April 1831, #28.

by-day accounts. Rather, the editors used the opportunity to place the abdication of the emperor into the context of the political history of the young nation. As seen above in the title of the *Tribuno*'s "History," most editors referred to the abdication as the "regenerating revolution." According to the *Nova Luz Brasileira*, after the abdication "the Brazilians began finally to possess a Patria." According to the editors, the people rose up to overthrow a "traitor" who ruled as a "tyrant" even though he was "nothing more than the first employee of the nation."<sup>2</sup> A correspondent calling himself "A Veteran of Independence" summed up the newspaper reactions by writing: "Today we have a patria; today Brazilians have a Brazil."<sup>3</sup> After arguing for an increased role for the people in Pedro's government and then exhorting the public to act in political affairs, it comes as no surprise that editors would interpret the abdication as a "revolution in which we lost nothing and gained all."<sup>4</sup>

The editors did not stop at just analyzing the abdication and interpreting the role of the people in the end of Pedro's reign. Several editors played key roles in the formation of the new government. Both Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga of the *Aurora Fluminense* and Antonio Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* were intrinsically involved in helping form the shape of the new government. Fonseca argued for an end to the monarchy and decentralization of political control, leading hopefully to a federation of Brazilian provinces.<sup>5</sup> Evaristo argued forcefully for the perpetuation of the monarchy under the rule of Pedro's

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<sup>2</sup>*Nova Luz Brasileira*, 15 April 1831, #131.

<sup>3</sup>*Voz Fluminense*, 16 April 1831, #152.

<sup>4</sup>*Tribuno do Povo*, 14 April 1831, #27.

<sup>5</sup>Fonseca argues that he was pushed out of the decision-making process by Evaristo, who came to wield an undue amount of power. Fonseca eventually took an official post in the Northeast but soon resigned as it became clear his vision for the future of the nation was overwhelmed by the counsel of Evaristo. Antonio Borges da Fonseca, *Manifesto Politico, Apontamentos de Minha Vida Politica e da Vida Politica do Dr. Urbano Sabino Pessoa de Melo*, (Recife: Typ. Commercial de G. H. de Mira, 1867).

appointed heir, the five-year-old Pedro II. To help protect the monarchy, Evaristo formed a political organization made up of elite residents of Rio de Janeiro under the name “Society for the Defense of Liberty and National Independence.”<sup>6</sup> The society published numerous pamphlets and articles in leading newspapers regarding the future of the Brazilian state and the need to defend the monarchy at all costs.

Evaristo had good reason to worry about the future of the Brazilian monarchy, and indeed the nation of Brazil as a whole. In the aftermath of the riot of the Nights of the Broken Bottles thousands of Brazilians took to the streets to protest Pedro’s government and march behind liberal editors. Editors encouraged their readers through their articles and actions to participate in the tumultuous events. Throughout the night of 6-7 April the Campo de Santanna was full of Brazilians, including many members of the military, arguing for governmental change and listening to fiery speeches from Borgês da Fonseca of the *República* and Francisco das Chagas de Oliveira França of the *Tribuna do Povo*. When the news of the abdication broke, the people erupted in cheers and the Campo was the site of celebration for several days afterwards. However, the people had not dispersed by a few days after the abdication. The military remained armed and camped in the field, while hundreds of Brazilians roamed the streets singling out Portuguese for ridicule or attack. Shops were closed and the functioning of the city remained at a standstill. It was not clear that the tempest released by the newspaper editors would ever be contained.

Editors turned to their newspapers to help quell passions. All the newspapers reprinted the almost daily advisories written by the military and police commanders and the heads of the municipal council, legislature, and provisional regency. They also printed a

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<sup>6</sup>Barman writes that the society had members outside of Rio. They “brought together the regime’s supporters and coordinated their activities.” Roderick Barman, *Brazil: The Forging of a Nation*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 165.

pamphlet written by Borgês da Fonseca titled “Compatriots” that argued: “Prudence, moderation, order, and respect for our officials will save the Patria.”<sup>7</sup> The *Aurora Fluminense* followed with its own call for moderation. Evaristo wrote that “from the authorities and general Brazilians, nothing is heard but the language of order, moderation, and generosity.” Importantly, “no notable violence has been perpetrated.”<sup>8</sup>

The real danger foreseen by the editors of Rio was the breakup of the nation. The huge span of Brazil had been held together up to this point by several factors: the fear of slave revolt, the concentration of settlement along the coasts, and, perhaps most importantly, the presence of a legitimate monarch. Without a strong, stable ruler to hold together the far-flung nation, Brazil was in desperate need of another source of unity. Editors tried to provide a sense of national unity through their reporting of the riot and abdication. The *Verdadeiro Patriota* wrote that the “the insults made to the editor of the *Tribuna* and the shouts of death to the *República* incensed onlookers and became national insults.”<sup>9</sup> The *Espelho de Justiça* found nationalism to be a way to quell passions: “the people defended their rights, forgot rivalries, and embraced cordially. They found themselves bound by bonds of blood and friendship; they professed the same religion and spoke the same language.”<sup>10</sup> Finally, the *Aurora Fluminense* reported protests of the riot and celebrations of the abdication in the provinces of Minas Gerais, São Paulo, and Bahia to show that all residents of Brazil were concerned with events in Rio de Janeiro and, in turn, were affected by them.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Antonio Borgês da Fonseca, “Compatriotas,” Biblioteca Nacional (Brazil) Sala de Obras Raras 89,5,9 n. 16.

<sup>8</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 18 April 1831, #473.

<sup>9</sup>*Verdadeiro Patriota* 12 April 1831 #47.

<sup>10</sup>*Espelho de Justiça* 13 April 1831 #34.

<sup>11</sup>*Aurora Fluminense*, 18 April 1831, #473.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the editors, the 1830s would be Brazil's most disruptive and violent decade. Throughout Brazil numerous small revolts challenged the legitimacy of the regency and argued for local autonomy.<sup>12</sup> Even Rio faced its own revolts, including a military revolt in July 1831 that shattered any hope in a peaceful transition of power.<sup>13</sup> The foremost historian of the Regency (1831-1840) sees much of the violence and discord stemming from "social groups which, in the early 1820s, had been little involved in the political process."<sup>14</sup> Newspapers provided the means for those groups to act within the political realm. Now the challenge for the editors was to channel that action into productive dialogue to ensure the unity of Latin America's largest nation.

Rio de Janeiro in the last years of the First Empire witnessed a level of interaction on the part of the people in political affairs hitherto unseen in Brazil. Common residents of the city, not just the powerful or literate, voiced their concerns and marched for action. A vibrant corps of newspaper editors provided both the impetus and the means for this new

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<sup>12</sup>The most significant revolts were the Cabanagem (1834-40) and Balaida (1839-1940) in the North, the Pinto Madeira (1831-1832), Guerra dos Cabanos (1832-1833), Sabinada (1837-1838), and Praieira (1848-1849) in the Northeast, and the Farroupilha war (1835-1845) in the South. José Murilo de Carvalho, *A Construção da Ordem: A Elite Política Imperial*, (Rio de Janeiro: Relume Dumará, 1996), Hendrik Kraay, "'As Terrifying as Unexpected': The Bahian Sabinada, 1837-1838," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 72 no. 4, (November 1992), Jeffrey Mosher, "Challenging Authority: Political Violence and the Regency in Pernambuco, Brazil, 1831-1835," *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 37, (Winter, 2000), and Jeffrey Mosher, "Political Mobilization, Party Ideology, and Lusophobia in Nineteenth-Century Brazil: Pernambuco, 1822-1850," *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 80 no. 4, (2000).

<sup>13</sup>Barman, *Brazil*, 169.

<sup>14</sup> Barman, *Brazil*, 165.

public to participate in Rio's public sphere. Editors exhorted the public and led by example, while their newspapers provided the means for the newly emboldened public to act.

Newspapers provided two novel elements to late First Empire Rio de Janeiro's political culture. First, they provided avenues for political discussion independent of formal institutions of government. While Brazil did have a relatively inclusive political system, including wide suffrage and a popularly elected legislature, the mechanisms of power were beyond the reach of all but the very well-connected. Newspapers were available to all. Anyone could read or listen to the arguments in the newspapers, and over two thousand citizens wrote in to the newspapers expressing their opinion and interacting with affairs of the state. As we saw in chapter II, editors encouraged the reading and listening public to take an active role in political and social affairs. The public responded by using the press to combat corruption in political offices and carry on important social discussions of honor. Never before did their opinions have such a wide reach. Politics mattered and the public wanted to have a voice in the discussion.

The second novelty presented by the newspapers was the arguments themselves. A relatively free press and an increasingly bold editor corps ensured that the arguments read or listened to by the public were free of government propaganda and were ideas that the public had not heard before. Ideas of popular sovereignty, analyses of foreign models, and interpretations of current affairs reached the public via the new medium of the free press. Editors challenged the theoretical and practical foundations of the Brazilian state and presented models that situated Brazil in a New World framework. Their practical interpretations of civic rituals that re-envisioned the state helped ground their theoretical

discussion in familiar issues and ideas. Editors reinterpreted the legitimacy of the monarch and prepared the public to act within the political realm.

Finally, through their words and actions editors showed their readers and listeners that a New World political model, based on enlightenment principles of popular sovereignty, was an idea worth fighting for. Their nativist rhetoric galvanized residents of Rio, and editors played a significant role in the ongoing effort to define the Brazilian nation. Editors personalized politics and made the direction of the young empire the most vital topic of debate in the press, the street, the bar, and the home.

Historians have long understood that Pedro faced criticism from a broad segment of the population in the last years of his reign. They have also used the newspapers as evidence to argue that Pedro faced increasing public pressure. This dissertation has connected these two threads to show that the newspapers helped cause the public discord that Pedro faced, and, in turn, the public used the newspapers to act within the up-to-then restricted public sphere. An analysis of newspapers as both source and subject has helped uncover why editors found it necessary to undertake the sometimes dangerous occupation of journalist and what was important enough to the public that numerous residents participated in the newly developed political print culture.

This dissertation began with one central question: What was the connection between the significant increase in newspaper titles and the fall of Pedro's government? The explosion of the political press in the last few years of Pedro's rule was both a product of the successes of earlier newspapers that helped create a public that clamored for more news, and also an instigator in the discord and dissent that surrounded Pedro. A corps of editors steeped in New World liberal models of governing educated an eager reading and listening

public who acted on that education in the aftermath of the riot of the Nights of the Broken Bottles. By early 1831, the people had become accustomed to their new role as actors in the state and, as the strife and discord of the Regency period attested, would not settle for less.



## APPENDIX 1:

### PROCLAMATION GIVEN BY EMPEROR PEDRO I TO THE RESIDENTS OF MINAS GERAIS (MINEIROS), 22 FEBRUARY 1831

Mineiros. This is the second time that I have had the pleasure to find myself amongst you; this is the second time that the love that I consecrate to Brazil has conducted me here.

Mineiros, I will not address myself only to you: the interest is general; I speak therefore to all Brazilians. There exists a disorganizing party, who, availing themselves of the purely peculiar circumstances of France, try to deceive you with the invectives against my inviolable and sacred person, and against the Government, for the purpose of enacting in Brazil scenes of horror, covering it with misery, with the intent of seizing power and satiating their vengeance and their personal passions, at the expense of the country (which they do not consider), them who have traced the revolutionary plan.

They write without disguise, and excite the people to federation, thinking to save themselves with Article 174 of the Fundamental Code that rules us. This article does not permit any change in its essence.

Can there be a greater attack against the constitution that we have sworn to defend and to sustain, than the

Mineiros, he esta a segunda vez, que Tenho o prazer de Me Achar entre vós. He esta a segunda vez que o Amor, que Eu Consagro ao Brasil, aqui Me conduz.

Mineiros, não Me Dirigirei somente a vós: o interesse he geral; Eu Fallo pois com todos os Brasileiros. Existe him partido desorganizador, que, aproveitando-se das circunstancias puramente peculiares da França, pertende illudir-vos com invectivas contra a Minha Inviolavel, e Sagrada Pessoa, e contra o Governo, a fim de representar no Brasil scenas de horror, cobrindo-o de lucto; com o intento de empolgarem empregos, e saciarem suas vinganças, e paixões particulares, a despeito do bem da Patria, )a que não attendem) aquelles, que tem traçado o plano revolucionario.

Escrevem sem rebuço, e concitão os Povos á Federação; e cuidão salvar-se deste crime com o Artigo 174 da Lei Fundamental, que Nos rege. Este Artigo não permite alteração alguma no essencial da mesma Lei.

Haverá hum attentado maior contra a Constituição, que Juramos Defender, e Sustentar, do que pertender alteral-a na sua

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<sup>1</sup>A complete translation can be found in John Armitage, *History of Brazil*, (New York: AMS Press, Inc.), [1836], 1970, vol. 2, 109-110, though his translation does not differ significantly from mine.

intention to alter it in its essence?  
Would this not be a manifest attack  
on the solemn oath that, in front of  
God, we have voluntarily given?  
Dear Brazilians, I do not speak to  
you now as your Emperor, but as  
your cordial friend. Do not be  
deluded by seductive and pernicious  
doctrines. They can only contribute  
to your ruin, and to that of Brazil,  
and never to the general felicity of  
the country. Help me then to sustain  
the Constitution such as it exists, and  
such as we have sworn to it. I will  
rely on you; you can rely on me.<sup>1</sup>

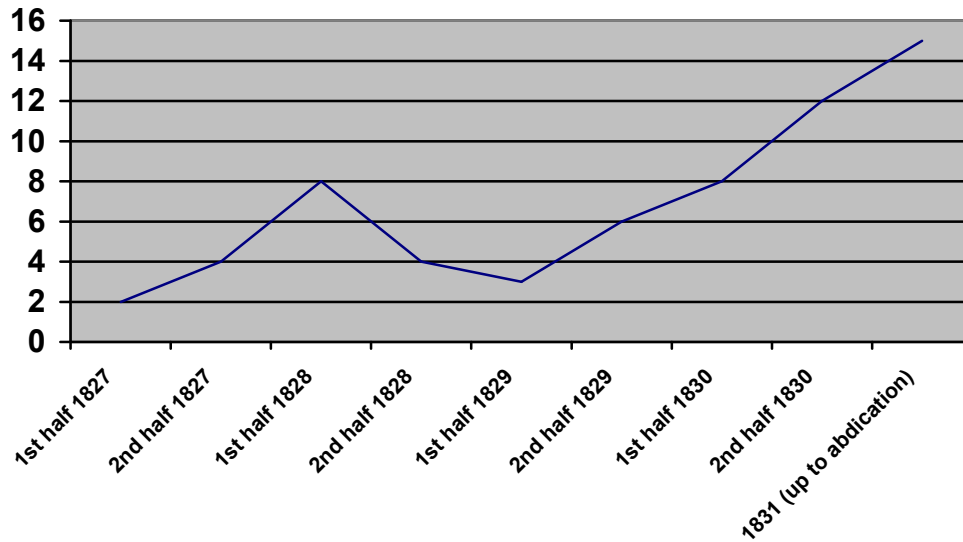
essencia? Não será isto hum ataque  
manifesto ao Sagrado Juramento, que,  
perante Deos, Todos Nós muit  
voluntariamente Prestamos?  
Ah! Caros Brasileiros, Eu não vos Fallo  
agora como vosso Imperador, he sim como  
vosso Cordeal Amigo. Não vos deixeis  
illudir por doutrinas, que tanto tem de  
seductoras, quanto de perniciosas. Ellas só  
podem concorrer para a vossa perdição, e  
do Brasil; e nunca para a vossa felicidade, e  
da Patria. Ajudai-Me a sustentar a  
Constituição, tal qual existe, e Nós  
Juramos. Conto com vosco, contaí  
comigo.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>The complete original text can be found in *Aurora Fluminense* 11 March 1831, #460 and Tobias Monteiro, *O Primeiro Reinado*, (São Paulo: Editora Itatiaia Limitada, 1982), vol 2., 199-200.

## APPENDIX 2:

### NUMBERS OF NEWSPAPERS IN RIO DE JANEIRO, 1827 TO 1831



Source: Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, *Catálogo de Periódicos Brasileiros Microfilmados*, Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, 1994.

This graph represents the number of newspapers in Rio de Janeiro between January of 1827 and 7 April 1831. Not included in the graph are the daily newspapers (*Jornal do Comércio* and *Diário do Rio*), and the titles that were unavailable for study at the time the research for this dissertation was completed (*Diário Fluminense/Governo*, *Analista*, *Gazeta do Rio*).

APPENDIX 3:  
ARTICLE SUBJECTS

**Total 4821**

<b>Economics</b>	<b>n=323</b>	<b>7%</b>
Bank	96	30%
Commerce	31	10%
Finance	192	60%
Treaty	4	1%
<b>Military</b>	<b>n=168</b>	<b>3%</b>
General	108	64%
Mercenary	29	17%
War	31	18%
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>n=43</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>n=764</b>	<b>16%</b>
Accused	90	12%
Liberty of the press	88	12%
Mechanics	18	2%
Pedro	16	2%
State of the press	552	72%
<b>Politics</b>	<b>n=3010</b>	<b>62%</b>
Aristocracy	21	3%
Corruption	42	1%
Elections	102	3%
International	499	16%
Legislature	518	17%
Ministers	116	4%
National	563	18%
Other	21	1%
Portugal	130	4%
Rio	226	8%
Rituals	81	3%
Theory	691	23%
<b>Society</b>	<b>n=513</b>	<b>11%</b>
Arts	100	19%
City	32	6%
Crime	48	9%
Education	48	9%

Honor	20	4%
Immigration	33	6%
Industry	21	4%
Law	55	11%
Medicine	20	4%
Morals	7	1%
Nationalism	26	5%
Religion	48	10%
Slavery	32	6%
Women	23	4%

APPENDIX 4:  
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

<b>Total</b>	<b>2014</b>
Pseudonymous letters to the editor:	1665 82%
<b>Economics</b>	<b>n=237 12%</b>
Bank	73 31%
Commerce	55 23%
Finance	104 44%
Treaty	5 2%
<b>Military</b>	<b>n=184 9%</b>
General	135 73%
Mercenary	23 13%
War	26 14%
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	<b>n=61 3%</b>
<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>n=192 10%</b>
Accused	35 18%
Liberty of the press	31 16%
Mechanics	1 1%
Pedro	0 0%
State of the press	125 66%
<b>Politics</b>	<b>n=791 40%</b>
Aristocracy	8 1%
Corruption	94 12%
Elections	64 9%
International	42 5%
Legislature	97 12%
Ministers	49 6%
National	207 28%
Other	30 4%
Portugal	8 1%
Rio	87 11%
Rituals	16 2%
Theory	89 11%
<b>Society</b>	<b>n=547 27%</b>
Arts	34 6%
City	92 17%

Crime	46	8%
Education	33	6%
Honor	128	23%
Immigration	9	2%
Industry	10	2%
Law	55	10%
Medicine	54	10%
Morals	2	0%
Nationalism	24	4%
Religion	39	7%
Slavery	13	2%
Women	8	1%

APPENDIX 5:

BOOKSTORES IN RIO DE JANEIRO, 1827-1830

No.	Sold newspapers?	Name of shop (if known)	Address
1			Ouvidor #183
2	x	Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga	Pescadores #49
3		Albino Jordão	Ouvidor #138
4	x	João Baptisto dos Santos	Cadeia #65
5		João Lopes de Oliveira Guimaraes	Sabão #196
6			Sabão #48
7		Coutinho e Agra	Ouvidor #113
8	x	Crémière	Ourives #86
9		Douville e comp.	
10		Souza, Laemmert, e Co.	Latoeiros #88
11			Conde #4
12	x	João Pedro da Veiga	Quitanda, esquina de S. Pedro
13			São Pedro #154
14			Ferradores #229
15		R. Ogier	Cadeia #143
16			São Pedro #219
17			Ouvidor #75
18			Pedreira da Candellaria #57
19	x	Emil Seignot Plancher	Ouvidor #95
20	x	Armarinho da Rua d'Ajuda	Ajuda #118
21	x		Alfandega 47
22	x	João Baptista Bompard	Pescadores #47
23	x	Amarinho da Rua dos Ciganos	Ciganos #6
24	x		Gloria #46
25	x	Botica das Mangueiras	Mangueiras #21
26	x	Silvino Jose de Almeida	Praça da Constituição #51
27	x	Botica de Valongo	Valongo #83

Sources: Newspaper mastheads and book sale announcements in the *Diario do Rio* and the *Jornal do Comércio*



APPENDIX 6:  
TYPOGRAPHERS

Name	Address	Newspapers published <sup>1</sup>
Astea	Sacramento 23	Malagueta, Tribuno, República, Nova Luz Brasileiro, Voz Fluminense, Astrea
Diario	Ajuda 115	Aurora Fluminense, Brasileiro Imparcial, Conciliador, Verdadeiro Patriota, Espelho de Justiça, Nova Luz Brasileiro, Astrea
Gueffier	Quitanda 79	Revue, Novo Censor, Moderador
Hunt	Alfandega 126	Literary Intelligencer, Espelho de Justiça
Lessa e Pereira	Rua detraz do hospicio 95	Luz Brasileiro, Brasileiro Offendido, Voz Fluminense
Mercantil	Alfandega 426	Astrea
Moderador	? (probably home of editor of newspaper of same name)	Moderador
Nova Luz Brasileiro	? (probably home of editor of newspaper of same name)	Voz Fluminense
P. Pedro Seignot	Ouvidor 95	Censor Brasileiro, Echo de la Amerique du Sud, Honra do Brasil, Espelho Diamantino, Rio Herald
Ogier	Cadeia 83	República, Novo Brasileiro Imparcial, Narcizo, Moderador
Torres	Cadeia	Perilampo Popular, Verdade sem Rebuço

Source: Newspaper mastheads

<sup>1</sup>Note that newspapers often switched typographers, accounting for the multiple appearances of several titles.

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All newspapers were printed in Rio de Janeiro. Dates indicate editions used in this dissertation, not the complete run of the title.

<i>Aurora Fluminense</i>	1827-1831
<i>Astrea</i>	1826-1831
<i>O Brasileiro Imparcial</i>	1830
<i>Cartas ao Povo</i>	1831
<i>O Censor Brasileiro</i>	1828
<i>O Conciliador</i>	1828
<i>Diario Fluminense</i>	1827-1829
<i>L'Echo de L'Amerique du Sud</i>	1827-1828
<i>O Espelho da Justica</i>	1830-1831
<i>O Espelho Diamantino</i>	1827-1828
<i>Honra do Brasil</i>	1828
<i>Jornal do Commercio</i>	1827-1831
<i>The Literary Intelligencer</i>	1831
<i>Luz Brasileira</i>	1829-1830
<i>A Malagueta</i>	1822; 1827-1829
<i>Moderador</i>	1829-1830
<i>O Narcizo</i>	1831
<i>Nova Luz Brasileira</i>	1829-1831
<i>O Novo Censor</i>	1831
<i>O Novo Brasileiro Imparcial</i>	1831
<i>O Brasileiro Offendido</i>	1831
<i>O Perilampo Popular</i>	1830
<i>O Republico</i>	1830-1831
<i>Revue Bresilienne</i>	1831
<i>Rio Herald</i>	1828
<i>O Tribuno do Povo</i>	1830-1831
<i>A Verdade Sem Rebouco</i>	1829
<i>Voz Fluminense</i>	1829-1830
<i>O Verdadeiro Patriota</i>	1830-1831

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