

THE LUSO-BRAZILIAN MEDICAL STUDENTS AT MONTPELLIER AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INTELLECTUAL ELITE BETWEEN TWO ATLANTIC EMPIRES

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Resumo: Este capítulo procura relacionar os estudos recentes sobre a circulação de ideias no final do século XVIII com sua congênera social, a circulação das elites. A ida de um conjunto de Luso-brasileiros até a França para se formarem em Medicina na Universidade de Montpellier permite perceber os diferentes elementos socioculturais que motivaram estes jovens. Mas os mecanismos de circulação de ideias não foram levados em consideração quando se trata destes filhos de famílias abastadas que empregaram seus conhecimentos em diferentes regiões do império «em troca» de honras e benefícios. A vida em França e supostos envolvimento políticos têm sobreposto o que parece ter sido a mais forte razão para estes portugueses da América terem partido para o Languedoc.

Palavras-chave: História da Medicina; Universidade de Montpellier; Educação Médica; Ideias e elites.

Abstract: This chapter aims to relate recent studies on the circulation of ideas in the late 18th century with its social counterpart, the circulation of elites. The departure of a group of Luso-Brazilians to France in order to graduate in Medicine at the University of Montpellier allows modern scholars to understand the different sociocultural elements that motivated these young people. However, the mechanisms for the circulation of ideas were not taken into account when analyz-

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ing with these sons of wealthy families who applied their knowledge in different regions of the empire «in return» for honors and benefits. The life in France and alleged political involvements have overlapped what seems to be the strongest reason for these students from Portuguese America to have left for the Languedoc.

Keywords: History of Medicine; University of Montpellier; Medical Education; Ideas and elites.

INTRODUCTION

The transit of intellectuals and all sorts of people at the service of European states throughout the continent has been studied in recent years through different historiographical traditions and history fields¹, and historians of science and medicine have paid special attention to the practical implications of these relations: from the establishment of contact and knowledge networks to the configuration of state apparatuses for the benefit of monarchs and their subjects. In the Portuguese case, the reform of the University of Coimbra was the first and most important element of this willingness to investigate the colonial domains, looking at their peoples, animals, plants, and minerals, in short, their riches and secrets. Considerably influenced by the Enlightenment and its models of a practical science (knowledge and ordering the natural world through description and classification), the Portuguese crown took control of its university, which had been under religious rule. This change was followed by direct support of the crown in exploratory journeys into the imperial hinterlands in America, Africa, and Asia², and also in training journeys, in which former students of the restructured University of Coimbra received pensions and support in order to learn about distinctive products, as well as the different techniques and teaching methods used in other European empires³.

All these connections have been part of a context in which different worlds were in contact. European students taking classes with Brazilian-born professors, collections and exchange of artifacts from the most various parts of the globe, introduction and adaptation of plants on a global scale, settlement of trained doctors in areas almost exclusively based on folk traditions of healing. In short, a variety of networks at the core of European empires along with an equally intricate circulation of ideas, «products» and peoples.

Nevertheless, although imperial states have given a significant amount of support and influence, the interconnection of these two worlds (inside empires, and between empires) was not exclusively the consequence of government decisions. Quite the opposite, plenty of them have been carried out by private individuals, even without financial aid. Many of these exchanges came along with ideas that totally contrasted imperial agendas, like the republicanism in regions controlled by monarchs far away from that territories. Those relations drove consequences in many aspects of people's lives, ultimately culminating, as recently shown by Fabrício Pereira Prado for the case of Uruguay, in an inde-

¹ DOMINGUES, 2001; FURTADO, 2012a; PRATT, 1992; CARNEIRO & SIMÕES, 2000; RAPOSO *et al.*, 2014.

² PATAÇA, 2006.

³ VARELA *et al.*, 2004: 688-695.

pendence process. Prado was particularly concerned with the *Banda Oriental*, a Spanish dominion, but we can generalize to other empires as well. He states that the «transimperial interaction shaped colonial identities and political culture»⁴, placing his work with the new historiographical perception over imperial states; as fluid empires, or «polycentric monarchies», and no longer described as rigid, structured, and totally controlled by the state.

Along with goods, plants, epidemics, and radical ideas, those very people and states also exchanged a hope for new possibilities: new relations with the mother country (and for some, with no relations at all), new conceptions of illness and death, of plants and its purposes. This chapter intends, therefore, to analyze these connections, in light of the new perception of imperial states and its subjects, essentially analyzing medical aspects and the transit of an American-born elite group between two Atlantic empires.

Concerning all those «non-state» actions, we might notice that in the world of health, the marked influences of the Enlightenment contributed to a more practical medical education, with perspectives that sought to make up for the state deficiencies in health care. With those influences, disapproval of popular knowledge (strongly related to rationalist ideals, although not taking equal opportunities in consideration because doctors remained attached to their elevated social status) led to criticism of popular care in itself. However, at the same time, those very doctors paid attention to people's health, and not only on an individual basis. Besides, as Jean Luiz Neves Abreu has noted, health was a striking element of «philosophical» journeys⁵; to mention just one example, it is important not to neglect that José Pinto de Azeredo was sent to Angola also to teach medicine⁶. Thus, government actions were carried out on behalf of the peoples of the Portuguese imperial dominions.

Throughout the 18th century, a total of fifteen Portuguese born in South America travelled overseas (extending both their physical and cultural frontiers) and settled in the south of France to study medicine at the renowned University of Montpellier⁷. Specifically considering these details, this chapter will attempt to investigate this group, seeking to analyze their motivations and participation in the set of actions guided by the Portuguese crown, which were promoted as a way to foster the empire's economy, reduce the mortality of subjects and slaves, and set up a state capability to act precisely based on the knowledge of the different regions (their environment, animals, and peoples), which until then had been totally unfamiliar or misapprehended by the state.

All fifteen who attended Montpellier went there in the second half of the 18th century, but there is a considerable temporal distance between the first two and the others: Joaquim Inácio de Seixas

⁴ PRADO, 2015: 4.

⁵ ABREU, 2007.

⁶ PINTO *et al.*, 2005; AZEREDO, José Pinto de – *Essays on Some Maladies of Angola (1799)*. Eds. Timothy D. Walker, Adelino Cardoso, António Braz de Oliveira e Manuel Silvério Marques; trans. Stewart Lloyd-Jones. Dartmouth, MA: Tagus Press, 2016.

⁷ We must point out that Montpellier was becoming lesser and lesser attractive, yet it was still one of the greatest centers for medical students. It's this very movement of people, from a region to another, that celebrate the circulation of knowledge. We realized it because of this passage: «Although groups of students with family medical traditions and more restricted finances continued to study in Montpellier, others invested both more time and more resources than ever before and traveled to Edinburgh, a medical center that was described by knowledgeable commentators as the best possible medical school at the time» (RIEDER & LOUIS-COURVOISIER, 2010: 584).

Brandão attended the college between 1766 and 1767, while the second student only joined him a decade later: Jacinto José da Silva Quintão was at the college between 1776 and 1778. The remainder attended between 1783 and 1794. This agglomeration at the end of the century allows us to conjecture that the first two students influenced the following ones to go to Montpellier, guiding them in an unusual and, for some, a controversial path.

From different areas of Portuguese America, these students illustrate that the wealthiest regions of that overseas domain were Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Pernambuco, and Bahia, with seven, five, two, and one student coming from these places, respectively. In this sense, it is important to stress the repeated references to the means of some students and the requirement for an education overseas⁸: Not only the cost of travel, but also their maintenance and survival in France depended heavily on their purchasing power, on their social relations, and the influence of their relatives or their families' protectors. Moreover, to study abroad, they also needed language skills. Not only did they need French to live, but also Latin for their classes (which, in general, they learned from tutors at home or, at a more advanced age, at religious seminars for children and adolescents). In short, the educational process for those who lived abroad demanded the possession of both cultural and economic capital sufficient to graduate and, equally, to attract their professors' attention (remembering that this was a society in which cultural literacy was strongly tied to social values and manners).

THE CHOICES FOR STUDYING AT MONTPELLIER MEDICAL SCHOOL

With all these rules and costs, would it not have been less laborious and costly to simply graduate in Coimbra, as did the vast majority of Luso-Brazilians? In other words, why did these fifteen attend Montpellier, knowing the greater convenience Coimbra represented and, at the same time, what the consequences of earning a medical degree in France would be? Answering these questions is an almost impossible task since the sources on these Luso-Brazilians are scarce and, as will be seen, quite concrete assertions have been made without any evidentiary basis for them.

Howsoever, through the sparse documentation that still remains, the main motivations for them to have chosen Montpellier as their destination can be inferred. Stressing that the different aspects of these motivations did not conflict with each other and might have been considered together by them in choosing this faculty of medicine; the first element, as mentioned above, was the effect of the first adventurers on Languedoc soil, which ended up provoking attention and attracting the other Luso-Brazilians. Of this cohort, perhaps the most significant were the Arruda da Câmara brothers, who were students of philosophy and mathematics at the reformed University of Coimbra. One of the brothers, Manoel, attended the Montpellier Faculty of medicine only after his brother, Francisco, had made the journey (in fact, he had practically completed his term there when Manoel attended). Similarly, Joaquim José de Souza Ribeiro and José Joaquim da Maia e Barbalho studied during the same periods at both Coimbra and Montpellier, attending the French medical school together.

⁸ OLIVEIRA, 1977: 25.

The majority of them practiced as doctors after their return to the Portuguese empire. In total, nine students practiced the healing arts after they completed their educations, with two others not practicing medicine but engaging in medicine-related activities (namely, botanical knowledge applied for therapeutic purposes). Only some of those involved in seditious activities (José Joaquim da Maia e Barbalho and Domingos Vidal Barbosa Lage), Eleutério José Delfim (who did not finish college) and Joaquim José de Souza Ribeiro (who, after graduation at Montpellier, went to Santo Domingo) did not engage in medicine-related activities.

Another issue that should not be disregarded but has been overestimated lately is whether the choice to attend Montpellier was specifically to escape the oppressive reach of the Portuguese state and the Catholic Church. According to Bella Herson, many of these students were New Christians and chose to take their education in France and flee from the Portuguese Inquisition⁹ because access to groups such as the New Christians was still limited¹⁰, although the Portuguese purity of blood law had been abolished in 1772. Similar considerations can be perceived in relation to the Portuguese state, which had an eye on the students at the University of Coimbra: in fact, some authors argue that Diogo Inácio de Pina Manique had informers even at Montpellier¹¹. However, it seems these answers are insufficient because while they might explain several reasons for not choosing Coimbra, they say nothing about the attractiveness of Montpellier (they could have chosen Paris or some British university, for instance, where they would also have escaped the aforementioned pressures). Moreover, unreliable explanations have been put forward, especially when we consider that some of these students previously attended the University of Coimbra, besides the fact that the evidence pointed to by Herson about the New Christians is not consistent. Yet, despite the caveats to these interpretations, we should pay attention to such possibilities, mainly because, in that context, such issues could have been considered by the fifteen Luso-Brazilians at Montpellier, although not to the extent asserted by the authors mentioned above.

The Catholic religion, for its part, could also have formed an essential element in this set of factors. This might even be the reason for choosing a university in France rather than in the United Kingdom, the Dutch Republic, or other regions (although, as pointed out earlier, this possibility would be for a decision to study in France or Spain, but not specifically at Montpellier). Indeed, some of these Luso-Brazilians stressed their beliefs in different manuscripts¹², but as this was also part of a rhetoric (not disregarding the possibility of them being real reasons), the existence of clearly Catholic statements does not enable us to define religion as an undeniable reason for the choice of the University of Montpellier. Therefore, we have a primary set of possibilities that were certainly significant in some cases, although not in the same way for all. Religion persecution, and the state, apart from the presence of other Portuguese students from America, may well have reinforced the decision to go to Montpel-

⁹ For an appropriate approach to the correlation between healers and the Inquisition, see WALKER, 2005.

¹⁰ HERSON, 1996.

¹¹ GONÇALVES, 1999: 361.

¹² José Mariano Leal da Câmara Rangel de Gusmão, for instance, states on the prologue of his thesis, Propositions about erysipelas which reign endemic among Brazilians, that they would be submitted «with God's help and auspices of the Saint Mary» (GUSMÃO, 1790).

lier, but participation in seditious movements after the return to Portuguese America has also been considered as a reason and still is the main element of this choice.

DID THE STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN SEDITIOUS MOVEMENTS?

The names of several of these «Montpellerins» were linked to seditious and insurrectionary movements: Manoel Arruda da Câmara and his brother were claimed to be the founding fathers of Freemasonry in Pernambuco and for having fostered the foundation of the republican movements that followed in that region; José Joaquim da Maia e Barbalho sought Thomas Jefferson, looking for support for the independence of the Minas Gerais province; Domingos Vidal Barbosa Lage and José Mariano Leal da Câmara Rangel de Gusmão were also participants in the movement, and even the slave trader, Eleutério José Delfim, would have taken part in the *Inconfidência Mineira*; in Rio de Janeiro, Jacinto José da Silva Quintão and Vicente Gomes da Silva would have been active in the Carioca Conjuración (Rio de Janeiro Conspiracy), having even been arrested.

Thus, the dissemination of the idea that these Luso-Brazilians went to Montpellier for political reasons is not surprising: out of a total of fifteen students, eight subsequently become involved in insurgency movements. However, as we shall now discuss, it seems that many of these involvements were overestimated, creating the idea that life in Montpellier, far from the spotlight and Portuguese state repression, would have been the primary motive of the trip to France.

Beginning with the *Inconfidência Mineira*, it should be noted that the crucial source of analysis is the *Autos da Devassa* itself (hereafter ADIM), an official legal document produced by the Portuguese crown to prosecute those charged with participating in the movement. In the ADIM, one of the most important events was the story of the meeting between José Joaquim da Maia e Barbalho (known by the pseudonym, Vendek) and Thomas Jefferson (then an ambassador of the United States) at the ancient Roman ruins of the city of Nîmes, near Montpellier. This comprises a Roman coliseum, an aqueduct, the Maison Carrée, the Temple of Diane, and the Tour Magne. For us, the most likely place for this meeting was at some of the monuments near the city park, Les Jardins de la Fontaine, a more appropriate area for a secret meeting. At the time, the letters exchanged between them were not known, so that investigators only knew the facts through the report of third parties, since Maia e Barbalho died in 1788 in Lisbon. The main informers of the meeting were Domingos Vidal Barbosa Lage, also a medical student at Montpellier, and his cousin, Francisco Antônio de Oliveira Lopes¹³.

Lopes reported that his cousin had told him that a student had contacted Thomas Jefferson¹⁴. In addition, he stated that his cousin had told him that, «while studying in Montpellier, he had met two people who said they were sent» (i.e., they were there to work for the «cause»)¹⁵. Barbosa Lage, on the other hand, confirmed the story of the meeting between Maia e Barbalho and Thomas Jefferson. However, after realizing the implications of his speech, he eventually backed down, representing the

¹³ FURTADO, 2012b: 303-308; MAXWELL, 2003: 110.

¹⁴ *Autos da Devassa da Inconfidência Mineira* (ADIM). Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial de Minas Gerais, 1978, vol. 2, p. 62-63.

¹⁵ *Autos da Devassa da Inconfidência Mineira* (ADIM)... vol. 2, p. 90.

meeting in a derogatory manner, stating that Jefferson had treated the Luso-Brazilian with disdain, that he was regarded as extravagant, and that they laughed at his ideas¹⁶.

Besides, Barbosa Lage stated that José Mariano Leal da Câmara Rangel de Gusmão was about to arrive at Rio de Janeiro with Count of Resende's family and that Gusmão had heard the story from Maia e Barbalho himself¹⁷. The participation of Barbosa Lage and Vendek in the *Inconfidência Mineira*, was, with reason, never questioned, but the involvement of Gusmão in the seditious project is questionable since the only reference in this sense is that he would have heard the report of the meeting between Maia e Barbalho and Thomas Jefferson. In fact, he was only quoted by Domingos Vidal Barbosa Lage as a witness of the defence¹⁸, but he was not even requested to testify¹⁹. Despite the scant documentation that would attest to Gusmão's participation in the sedition attempt, there are authors who identify this former student as one of those who acted in the seditious movements of the late 18th century. Both Carlos Rizzini²⁰ and Manuel Xavier de Vasconcelos Pedrosa claimed Gusmão participated in the movement. For Pedrosa, Gusmão had dreamed «about a revolution in favour of Brazil's independence», but he would not have been «disturbed by this youthful whimsicality»²¹. Lycurgo de Castro Santos Filho also indicated that Gusmão was a participant in the seditious attempt alongside Barbosa Lage and Vendek²². In addition to these, in a well-known recent work that also analyses the Luso-Brazilian students at Montpellier, Bella Herson continues to mention Gusmão as one of Montpellier's former students who would have acted in favour of the *Inconfidência Mineira*²³. Perhaps Gusmão even participated in these events. This would not be unlikely, but there is no evidence for such vehement statements as those stated above, except for the testimony of Barbosa Lage (who only credits him as being aware of Vendek's meeting with Jefferson).

This non-involvement in the riots can be discerned, in a similar way, in relation to those supposedly involved in the Carioca Conjunction. Both Jacinto José da Silva Quintão and Vicente Gomes da Silva would have gone to Montpellier for political rather than medical reasons, but the so-called Conjunction was not an autonomous social and political movement. The repression of its members was, primarily, due to the fear of having another conspiracy like that of Minas Gerais, and worse, that a seditious movement in Rio de Janeiro would be successful. However, what occurred at most was a set of radical liberal discussions because there were no proposals for creating disruption. The Carioca Conjunction itself was the trial process conducted by royal authorities to see if the discussions held at the Literary Society of Rio de Janeiro were contrary to the order and the religion of the state, such as republican ideas. In the end, after verifying the interminable accusations of the viceroy, the Count

¹⁶ *Autos da Devassa da Inconfidência Mineira* (ADIM). Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial de Minas Gerais, 1976, vol. 1, p. 213; *Autos da Devassa da Inconfidência Mineira* (ADIM)... vol. 2, p. 93-94; *Autos da Devassa da Inconfidência Mineira* (ADIM). Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial de Minas Gerais, 1982, vol. 5, p. 395-397.

¹⁷ *Autos da Devassa da Inconfidência Mineira* (ADIM)... vol. 2, p. 94.

¹⁸ *Autos da Devassa da Inconfidência Mineira* (ADIM)... vol. 5, p. 396; *Autos da Devassa da Inconfidência Mineira* (ADIM). Belo Horizonte: Imprensa Oficial de Minas Gerais, 1981, vol. 4, p. 145-146.

¹⁹ *Autos da Devassa da Inconfidência Mineira* (ADIM)... vol. 4, p. 255.

²⁰ RIZZINI, 1957: 103.

²¹ PEDROSA, 1959: 51.

²² SANTOS FILHO, 1991: 385.

²³ HERSON, 1996: 240.

of Resende, the crown itself ordered, through D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho²⁴, that either the defendants were to be considered guilty (sending, therefore, the trial to Lisbon) or be released. The order of the powerful secretary forced Resende to act, so he requested the opinion of the judge, António Diniz da Cruz e Silva. The decision of Cruz e Silva, the person who was in charge of the process and, thus, responsible for conducting various confrontations and statements, was that discussions with Republican content had taken place, but no seditious attempts had been made:

it should be noted that none of the same prisoners are said to, or proved, that they entered into the conspiracy project, being all the blame they are charged with (and that against some is proved) that they sustain in conversations either private or public: that the republican government should be preferred to that of monarchies, that kings are oppressive tyrants of subjects [...]»²⁵.

The conclusion of the judge is meaningful, especially because the fear of sedition had begun with a charge by José Bernardo Silveira Frade that in many discussions within the Society, a defence of the republican system had been made. The two Luso-Brazilians involved were cleared in the process: Vicente Gomes da Silva was not even accused²⁶ and Jacinto José da Silva Quintão, although arrested, was released for lack of evidence by the judge, Cruz e Silva. Gomes da Silva was acquitted by the informer himself (Silveira Frade), who said that the former student of Montpellier had not been there when the fateful discussion in defence of the republic would have been taking place. Quintão, an active member of the Literary Society of Rio de Janeiro, was, as we said, effectively arrested and had some of his properties confiscated. From the inquest that followed into his belongings, we know that he had a seditious book and that some letters were considered suspicious²⁷. These were correspondence with a doctor, Manoel José Novais de Almeida, author of a controversial passage in which he effusively defended the achievement of Santo Domingo²⁸, although not long after that, he backed off from that liberating position, fearful that Brazil's enslaved people would become unmanageable²⁹. The content of the conversation with his medical friend worried the investigators; however, as mentioned above, Quintão was cleared of all accusations for lack of evidence. His release did not dispel his liberal outlook, but at the same time, the absence of seditious inclinations does not allow us to point out that political issues were what influenced his choice to go to Montpellier.

This seems to equally apply to the most well-known Luso-Brazilian medical student at Montpellier, Manoel Arruda da Câmara. Arruda da Câmara died in 1810, before the great political movements in Pernambuco erupted on the streets, but his connection would be in the idealization of the Pernambuco revolt. We say «seems» because his death does not eliminate the possibility that Arruda da

²⁴ KURY & MUNTEAL FILHO, 1995: 112.

²⁵ SILVA, António Diniz da Cruz e – *Documentos relativos a prisão de M. I. da Silva Alvarenga, Marianno J. Pereira da Fonseca e outros, por ordem do conde de Resende [1797]*. «Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro», vol. 28 (Primeira Parte). Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro, 1865, p. 157-161.

²⁶ Nevertheless, it is curious to realize that both Francisco Adolfo Varnhagen and Manuel Pedrosa, as well as Bella Herson, stated that he was arrested (HERSON, 1996: 248; PEDROSA, 1959: 53).

²⁷ MORAES, 2006: 36.

²⁸ SILVA, 2002: 184.

²⁹ SILVA, 2002: 181.

Câmara was familiar with the more radical aspects of the Enlightenment. Likewise, though, this does not allow us to be sure of his involvement in the implementation of these ideals or even in the idealization of the republican movements. Arruda da Câmara was, supposedly, one of the founders of the *Areópago de Itambé*, a Freemason society that would have been the focal point of the 1801 movement and, consequently, of the republican projects that followed, the Pernambuco Revolution (1817) and the Confederation of Ecuador (1824), therefore he is usually pointed out by Brazilian historians as one of the founding fathers of the emancipation/independence movement in Brazil³⁰.

However, the very nature of the 1801 movement is in doubt: By analysing the records of the inquest on this insurrection, we can see that there were no references to a seditious project³¹. In addition, Arruda da Câmara is often associated with the radical Enlightenment movement, not only because he is reported to be one of the founders of the aforementioned masonic society, but also because he was the mentor of Father João Ribeiro Montenegro, a major player in the Pernambuco Revolution, who became a member of the provisional government. However, it is well known that a disciple's tendencies do not necessarily follow those of the master. Nevertheless, the main proof of Arruda da Câmara's association with independence movements is the testament of Father Ribeiro declaring his desire to liberate his oppressed people from the clutches of Portugal:

My secret work, sends promptly to the British America to our friend N. because there are important things in it, that it is not suitable for the ferocious despotism to have even the littlest knowledge of it [...] do not care about this wretched and absurd cabundá aristocracy, which must always present futile obstacles. With or without a monarchy, colored people must enter into the prosperity of Brazil³².

But the supposed letter was never found. The very existence of this letter depends on a copy because the document itself does not exist. Even authors strongly inclined to inflate the liberal achievements of Arruda da Câmara, such as Francisco Muniz Tavares, expressed uncertainty regarding the veracity of this letter: As the author of the laudatory, *History of the Revolution of Pernambuco*, he used the phrase «if this letter is authentic»³³, pointing to his doubts about the anti-slavery ideas of Arruda da Câmara. The biographer of Arruda da Câmara, José Antônio Gonsalves de Mello, questioned the existence of this letter, and, more recently, Guilherme Pereira das Neves also pointed out the reasons for his objection to the truthfulness of this document³⁴. Neves was emphatic in noting that of Arruda da Câmara's letters that survived over time, their contents were ones of reverence rather than contestation. In addition, this researcher recalls that despite eliciting sympathy previously, the separatist proposal gained strength effectively only during the disagreements expressed at the *Cortes de Lisboa*³⁵.

³⁰ TAVARES, 1917: 71-73; MELLO, 1910: 7; PESSOA, 1973: 489-490; MACHADO, 1990: 40.

³¹ *Devassa de 1801 em Pernambuco*. In *Documentos Históricos*. Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Biblioteca Nacional/Divisão de obras raras e publicações, 1955, vol. 110, p. 164. Disponível em <<http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/DocReader.aspx?bib=094536&PagFis=45002>>. [Consulta realizada em 18/08/2016]; RODRIGUES, 1955: 11.

³² COSTA, 1882: 642

³³ TAVARES, 1917: 116.

³⁴ MELLO, 1982; NEVES, 1999.

³⁵ Recent analysis has shown that the idea of independence in Brazil was clear only at the eve of the process itself. Many of previous movements urged for a better govern, but did not proposed any separation with Portugal. For more, see CARVALHO *et al.*, 2014.

Besides, it is important to note that in all the writings of Arruda da Câmara, there are no references directly opposed to slavery, even though he expressed at different times an extremely positive outlook on Africans and Africa. In fact, from his letters that actually exist, he appears more concerned with matters of science than of politics: «If death surprises me before I complete the natural history of my country, I will carry it across my throat» (i.e., he will be disappointed or embittered)³⁶.

Thus, it does not seem that he chose Montpellier simply to escape from religious repression, as Adelto Gonçalves stated³⁷. In Montpellier, Arruda da Câmara became a disciple of Antoine Gouan and when he returned to the Portuguese Empire, he even sought to practice medicine. In 1792, he applied for authorization – the so-called *Carta de Medicina* – to practice medicine in the Portuguese domains, since he had graduated in France, but his comprehensive training in the area led the crown to appoint him to handle issues closer to the philosophy learned with the master, Antoine Gouan, rather than the healing arts. Throughout his life, Arruda da Câmara traveled through the hinterland of the «Brazilian» Northeast and conducted different investigations and discussions about the natural products of Portuguese America seeking to establish a commercial usage and generate profit from the minerals, plants and animals that he found and classified. Therefore, no matter how much Arruda da Câmara knew and eventually shared about republican ideas, as Lorelai Kury³⁸ well observed, his perception of the imperial reality and eventual contestation of it did not lead him (at least there are no documents that prove it) to become an asset to the Brazilian independence movements, despite him certainly becoming a significant figure in the popular political imagination.

His brother, however, joined the ranks of the fight against Portuguese rule, first, in the movement of 1817. Although his role was a secondary one and, therefore, he was not sent as a defendant to the prison of Bahia, the loyalty of Francisco Arruda da Câmara was questioned as soon as he was accused of having taken part in a rebellion against the crown³⁹. Years later, in 1824, he served in the Confederation of Ecuador and was eventually banned and sentenced to death *in absentia* after he had fled⁴⁰.

The other Luso-Brazilians who studied medicine in Montpellier are not identified as being seditious or for having discussions in favour of an alternative system to the Portuguese monarchy, although it is important to take into consideration that perhaps Joaquim José de Souza Ribeiro took part in the Haitian Revolution. He traveled to the region in the period when the revolt broke out, but his involvement is uncertain. Nonetheless, that initial presumption (that several of the Luso-Brazilian

³⁶ CÂMARA, Manoel Arruda da – *Museu Bocage, Carta de Manuel Arruda da Câmara para Vandelli, Pirauhá (Pernambuco), 11-XII-1797*. In SIMON, William Joel – *Scientific Expeditions in the Portuguese Overseas Territories (1783-1808), and the Role of Lisbon in the Intellectual-Scientific Community of the Late Eighteenth Century*. Lisbon: Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1983.

³⁷ GONÇALVES, 1999.

³⁸ KURY, 2012: 183.

³⁹ *Revolução de 1817*. In *Documentos Históricos*. Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Biblioteca Nacional/Divisão de obras raras e publicações, 1954, vol. 105. Disponível em <<http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/DocReader.aspx?bib=094536&PagFis=43600>>. [Consulta realizada em 20/09/2016]; *Revolução de 1817*. In *Documentos Históricos*. Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Biblioteca Nacional/Divisão de obras raras e publicações, 1954, vol. 106. Disponível em <<http://memoria.bn.br/DocReader/094536/43828>>. [Consulta realizada em 20/09/2016].

⁴⁰ *Sessão de 15 de Junho de 1826, n.º 29. Diário da Camara dos Deputados a Assembleia Geral Legislativa do Império do Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Imperial e Nacional, 1826, p. 406. Disponível em <<https://books.google.pt/books?id=5rxOAAAACAAJ>>. [Consulta realizada em 05/07/2016].

students who studied in Montpellier participated in independence movements) has become controversial. Whereas before, one could point to eight of the fifteen students having acted in different movements, it is now clear that only three of them effectively took part in such movements.

All of this verification of whether these students participated in independence movements allows us to reject the commonly accepted and repeated idea that the reason for the fifteen Luso-Brazilians to go to Montpellier was one of political motivation. Of course, this was not the case for José Joaquim da Maia e Barbalho, since he had always been involved with the attempted sedition of Minas Gerais and had decided to go to France precisely to put into practice his part in the plans of the *Inconfidência Mineira*⁴¹. But the political trajectory of Francisco Arruda da Câmara, on the other hand, indicates that he only got involved with political issues later, sometime after his graduation in France. In other words, life in Montpellier may well have influenced his vision of the world and contributed to his involvement in the struggles for the implementation of a republic in Pernambuco, but it was not the reason for his choice.

Thus, it is important to note what the priority of these Luso-Brazilians was in choosing to do their medical training in France. We have already pointed out that the presence of other Portuguese natives, religion, persecution, or even political motivations in some cases were taken into consideration in the decision to graduate outside of the Portuguese Empire. However, while it seems that these elements might have contributed to this choice, the decision to attend the Faculty of Medicine of Montpellier involved the recognition and quality of the institution itself.

PHYSICIANS OF WELFARE, OR SOCIAL ASCENT AS A PRIMARY CHOICE

Before he got himself involved with the political riots in Pernambuco, Francisco Arruda da Câmara lived a «normal» life as one of the sons of the local captain-major (and plantation owner), and he used to practice the healing arts in his homeland⁴². That is, a medical education in Montpellier was attractive to those who could afford the training costs abroad. Academic training, regardless of the university, was a great attraction especially for social groups that sought the possibility of social ascent. Although a military career was also sought by many, the university represented for several families the essential means of rising in society. As perceived by Roberta Stumpf:

*The good subject continues to be recognized as one who has been guided by Christian virtues, such as faith, hope, and charity, but his dignity would be even greater if he were equally useful to the monarchy. [...] rewards were expected from the community, which would give it prominence, but also from the monarchy that granted «prize», as the graces [mercês] that could open the doors to the aristocratic stratum*⁴³.

The vast majority of the fifteen students discussed here sought this possibility of social ascent through public service. If it is now clear that just three of the fifteen Luso-Brazilian students took part

⁴¹ BARBALHO, 1786.

⁴² AHU – Conselho Ultramarino, Pernambuco, cx. 235, doc. 15871. *Carta da Câmara de Goiana, ao príncipe regente [D. João], queixando-se dos procedimentos do Bispo de Pernambuco, D. José da Cunha Azeredo Coutinho, a respeito da arrematação das carnes frescas, única para toda capitania, beneficiando seu protegido Francisco de Arruda Câmara, e se opondo às determinações régias que permite que as câmaras determinem os termos destas arrematações*, 1802.

⁴³ STUMPF, 2009: 35.

in the seditious movements, nine of them did participate in the public service immediately after their graduation from Montpellier⁴⁴, proving that these students really wanted to use their education to rise in society. With a relatively similar conclusion, Márcia Moisés Ribeiro also took into consideration the different perceptions regarding doctors and surgeons. Ribeiro noticed that life in Portuguese America did not attract the attention of known physicians, even though this was not the case for surgeons⁴⁵. In a similar way, these students knew that going to one of the most famous and prestigious medical schools at the time would make it easier to achieve their desired social goals. Besides, the medical training in an institution like Montpellier was meant to be *pari passu* to others centers where «the status of traditional medical knowledge as it was taught in conservative universities was declining whereas empirical practitioners were very much the fashion»⁴⁶. Even for those who did not finish their education, as was the case for Eleutério José Delfim, the choice to attend the Medical School of Montpellier seems to have been based on this social criterion: Despite him preferring to live as a slave trader, he initially sought medical training, even though he was the son of a wealthy businessman in Rio de Janeiro, which leads us to interpret his hesitant attendance at that medical school as a first attempt to achieve a better social status for himself and for his family (although the hard path of the medical education led him to withdraw).

Ronald Raminelli has specifically emphasized the importance of a university education, to achieve the much desired social ascent. Naturally, as discussed above, an academic education demanded financial resources. It was an investment in achieving a better family condition that only a few of them could afford. Because Coimbra was the only university of the empire and had easier access conditions (it was forbidden for those who graduated abroad to carry out activities in the empire, except with special authorizations), Coimbra became the first step in the social ascent process of many Luso-Brazilians:

*from Coimbra [...] the students aspired positions in the administration [...]. Graduated in Law, Mathematics, or Natural Philosophy [and we can add Medicine too] [...] they soon received assignments [...]. Training was, therefore, the first step in social mobility, a means of accumulating prestige and reaching posts and distinctions*⁴⁷.

Even for the fifteen «Montpellerins», Coimbra was essential since six of them attended the Portuguese university before they went to Montpellier. As Kenneth Maxwell has stated, an apprenticeship in Coimbra was very much a social recognition criterion of the families of Minas Gerais⁴⁸. The families sent their sons to be educated in Coimbra, later guaranteeing them a profession that did not connect the family to manual jobs. However, the people from Minas Gerais were not alone in seeking this

⁴⁴ Faustino José de Azevedo was Judge of Sesmarias, Joaquim Inácio de Seixas Brandão became «first physician» (sort of director) of the Royal Thermal Hospital of Caldas da Rainha, Inácio Ferreira da Câmara was sent to the Botanical Garden of Bahia, Manuel Arruda da Câmara took philosophical journal into the Northeast region of the Portuguese America with the royal support, José Joaquim de Carvalho was sent to the Military Royal Hospital in Recife, Manuel Joaquim de Souza to the Botanical Garden of Rio de Janeiro, José Mariano Leal da Câmara Rangel de Gusmão was physician of the Royal Chamber, Jacinto José da Silva Quintão became judge of the Protomedicato Tribunal (board of royal physicians) and, finally, Vicente Gomes da Silva was sent to the Military Royal Hospital in Rio de Janeiro.

⁴⁵ RIBEIRO, 2005: 66.

⁴⁶ RIEDER & LOUIS-COURVOISIER, 2010: 579.

⁴⁷ RAMINELLI, 2005: 324.

⁴⁸ MAXWELL, 2001: 397.

«shelter». Analyzing the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Coimbra, we can see that most of the Luso-Brazilian students in this course were from Rio de Janeiro (40.6%), followed by Bahia (26.3%), and then Minas Gerais (20.3%). The other regions together come to 12.8% (Goíás, Maranhão, Ceará, Paraíba, Pernambuco, and São Paulo)⁴⁹.

Following these indications, therefore, we should note that medical education was even attractive when it came to the social ascent of the Luso-Brazilian families. Thus, it was not by chance that these students decided to embark on the world of university education, because as it was one of the planks for achieving social mobility, the possession of a diploma in the oldest and one of the most important medical colleges of that time was an attempt to improve this social strategy: «knowledge was the bargaining chip for social ascension»⁵⁰.

If before Montpellier none of the fifteen students discussed here had relations with the Portuguese nobility, at the end of their lives, following their education in France and subsequent services to the Portuguese imperial state, some of them did correspond with nobles of the Portuguese court and prominent members of the state apparatus around the empire. Most of them managed to achieve diverse social positions, from receiving a royal appointment to perform a public function (with pensions and ordinances) to recognition as Commander of the Order of Christ. These honors, as Raminelli⁵¹ pointed out, created for their «holders» conditions of special access to a select world, where exemptions and privileges were the order of the day. An understanding of the pursuits of these students in this world prompts us to point out that this was the main reason for the choice of a medical training, where it can be deduced that the prominence and indisputable recognition of the Medical School of Montpellier was, in turn, the main reason for choosing this faculty over Paris or any other educational institution.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The decisions by these students to attend the Faculty of Medicine of Montpellier rather than other colleges represent not only a history of cultural contacts or political and cultural influences. They are the very history of Atlantic encounters, of the generation of an intellectual elite from Portuguese America that came to be seen by the state as essential to the «people's happiness» and to economic development around the empire. For nationalists' reasons, the movements of this South American elite were analyzed over many years according to the exclusive perspective of the process of the Brazilian independence movements. However, as we discussed, the interests of these sons of plantation owners, merchants, and judicial personnel were much more related to a social and political dynamic that, in some cases, even culminated in the defense of ideas that were the opposite of imperial interests.

⁴⁹ The college students were almost exclusively from Portugal (93.5%), with the Luso-Brazilians accounting for 4.9% of the total (students from Angola, Spain, France, England, Ireland, and Sweden did not add up to 1%). The production of these data was carried out mainly through the information provided by the Archive of the University of Coimbra in the *Index of students of the University of Coimbra (Índice de alunos da Universidade de Coimbra)*, and we received the assistance of Joana Alves to collect the information and for the general review. To analyze this data, see CAMPOS, 2017. Lastly, it is important to inform that was maintained the references of students with unknown or undetermined location.

⁵⁰ RAMINELLI, 2005: 299.

⁵¹ RAMINELLI, 2006.

Yet, political associations had not driven the lives spent abroad. When we dwell on the documentation that still exists, we can see that even some of those involved in radical political events sought at first to insert themselves into the rationality of honor and royal favors. Most of them ended up working in the health area and obtaining expected graces, elements that reinforce the perception that it was the medical training in a prestigious university that attracted those students to attend there.

The interactions between students from different parts of Europe and mostly from the Americas, a situation different from Coimbra, which had few students from other parts of the globe at its medical school, were just some of the elements that were added to the circulation of knowledge within the walls of the medical school of Montpellier. In the end, these former students performed functions that required the exchange of knowledge learned in France, and they used this «power» to seek to aspire to the conditions of an elite between two empires.

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