

The Invention of *Sete de Setembro*, 1822-1831¹

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Abstract

Using contemporary newspapers, travelers accounts, and the reports of foreign diplomats, this article examines the rapid invention of D. Pedro I's 7 September 1822 Cry of Ipiranga as Brazil's independence day. Contrary to those who have argued that it took some time to construct D. Pedro's actions that day as the Brazilian nation's founding moment, this article argues that, in fact, the day was recognized as Brazil's independence day in 1823. However, for much of the rest of the 1820s, it was considered less important a day of national festivity than 12 October, the emperor's birthday and the commemoration of his acclamation in 1822, and consequently the day on which the Brazilian empire was created. This article concludes with a discussion of the significant changes in the meaning of both days in 1830 and the abolition of 12 October as a day of national festivity in 1831, which left 7 September as Brazil's most important national holiday.

Keywords

national identity, political representation, Rio de Janeiro, Independence, civic rituals, First Reign

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The following abbreviations are used in the notes: CLB (Coleção das Leis do Brasil), NARS (National Archives and Records Service, United States), PRO/FO (Public Record Office, Foreign Office, Great Britain), RIHGB (Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro).

Introduction

Today it is a nationalist truism that d. Pedro I proclaimed Brazilian independence on 7 September 1822 on the banks of the Ipiranga in São Paulo. In that year, however, the historical meaning of his actions was not quite so clear-cut and, at least for the rest of 1822, contemporaries attributed little significance to the date and the Cry of Ipiranga as they busied themselves with the emperor's acclamation (12 October) and his coronation (1 December). This has led to a historical consensus that it took some time to construct Sete de Setembro as Brazil's independence day and that the day was not considered particularly important until well after 1822. In this article, I bring new evidence to this discussion and argue that, in fact, 7 September was recognized as Brazil's independence day in 1823 and that its commemoration quickly gained importance, at least in Rio de Janeiro, although 12 October remained a more important "day of national festivity" for much of the decade.

As early as 1860, Gottfried Heinrich Handelmann observed about 7 September that "at first, not as much importance was given to it as later," but he offered no sources for this assertion. A number of other historians have recently noted the limited attention to the events of 7 September 1822 in the Rio de Janeiro press later that year, the absence of the date from a list of court gala days published in December, and Hipólito José da Costa's failure to comment on the date in his *Correio Brasiliense* (among other things), all of which appear surprising in light of the later importance attributed to Sete de Setembro.² In 1995, Maria de Lourdes Viana Lyra published an article in which she argued that the construction of 7 September as Brazil's independence day began in the mid-1820s and was fully complete by 1830, with the publication of José da Silva Lisboa's *História dos principais sucessos do Império do Brasil*, an official history in which the viscount of Cairú presented Pedro as "solely responsible for the decision to free Brazil," an assessment that "perfectly served for the desired memory: the destruction of Luso-Brazilian unity and the consequent absolute independence of Brazil constituted exclusive acts of will on the part of the emperor-hero, who did everything to protect the liberty of his people."³

This was a conservative interpretation of independence and, as Lyra explains, Cairú was responding to the major debate of the 1820s regarding the origins of Pedro I's sovereignty: the reformist and conservative position held that it derived from his royal lineage while the revolutionary view held that only the people – the Brazilian nation – had the right to acclaim Pedro as their ruler and invest him with power. Pedro had to formally give up his claim to rule based on popular sovereignty in the 1825 treaty that resulted in Portuguese recognition, which in turn necessitated a reconstruction of the history of independence to emphasize that it came directly from Pedro's actions on 7 September 1822, and not through his acclamation by the Brazilian nation, which Cairú duly supplied.⁴

Lyra's elegant analysis, however, misses the extent to which Cairú's interpretation was contested by many of those who celebrated Sete de Setembro in 1830. Moreover, a closer look at the actual celebrations held on 7 September starting in 1823 (as described by foreign diplomats, a few travelers, and the press) reveals no doubt that it was already considered Brazil's independence day. Rather, the key issue was whether independence as proclaimed on 7 September was as important as Pedro's acclamation on 12 October (or even the other events that laid the groundwork for the

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HANDELMANN, Gottfried Heinrich. *História do Brasil*. 2 vols. Translated by the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro. Rio de Janeiro: IHGB, 1931, vol.2, p.792, note 171. The most detailed analysis of this question is by LYRA, Maria de Lourdes Viana. *Memória da Independência. Marcos e representações simbólicas*. *Revista Brasileira de História*, São Paulo, n.29, p.177-89, 1995. See also NEVES, Lúcia Maria Bastos Pereira das. *Corcundas e constitucionais: a cultura política da Independência (1820-1822)*. Rio de Janeiro: FAPERJ and Revan, 2003, p.369-370; OLIVEIRA, Cecília Helena de Salles. O Museu Paulista da USP e a memória da Independência. *Cadernos Cedex*, n.22, p.66-67, December 2002.

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LYRA, Maria de Lourdes Viana. Op.Cit. p.198, 201.

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Ibidem. p.191-197.

imperial political order). To judge by the celebrations held in Rio de Janeiro, Sete de Setembro was, for a short time, overshadowed by 12 October, but by the middle of the decade, it had caught up to the latter date. A second issue, vigorously debated in 1830 and 1831, was the nature of Pedro's role on 7 September 1822; many, in fact, rejected Cairú's view, and argued that Pedro's call for independence followed the nation's desire to be free.

Celebrating 7 September and 12 October, 1823-1825

From the perspective of Rio de Janeiro, the events of the second half of 1822 which led to the creation of an independent Brazilian empire offered two major alternatives from which to date the new regime's founding (the Cry of Ipiranga on 7 September or Pedro's acclamation on 12 October, also his birthday). It was not clear which of these days was most worthy of commemoration. A December 1822 decree mandating the court protocol for gala days failed to mention 7 September and, perhaps even more interestingly, identified no day as commemorating independence (12 October was described as Pedro's birthday and his acclamation).⁵ Earlier that month, however, Pedro had decreed that "given that it is appropriate to commemorate the glorious era of Brazil's Independence and its elevation to the status of Empire [...] the number of years elapsed from this era [...] shall be counted from the memorable day of 12 October of the current year."⁶

The following year, however, 7 September quickly gained prominence. During the throne speech that opened the Constituent Assembly on 3 May 1823, Pedro alluded to the date as his first ever declaration in favor of full independence.⁷ In early September, the assembly resolved that the day be considered, for the moment, a national holiday, for it was the "anniversary of Brazilian independence," and sent a large deputation to congratulate Pedro.⁸ Much to the surprise of Condé Raguet, the United States minister to Brazil, 7 September 1823 "was celebrated with all the parade, military, civil, and religious appropriate to so important a festival." He speculated that the ceremony had something to do with the increasingly acrimonious politics surrounding the assembly and wondered whether he had been wrong to see the acclamation (12 October 1822) as "the true day of the declaration of independence."⁹ The Baron Wenzel de Mareschal, the Austrian representative, was apparently not surprised and simply reported that "a military festival is being prepared for 7 September, as the day on which independence was proclaimed in São Paulo."¹⁰ The sole Rio de Janeiro press indication of this year's commemoration of 7 September was a sonnet in *O Sylpho* that concluded: "Thou art independent ... Oh! What remains for thee/Courage Brazil! Constitution or Death."¹¹ What Raguet referred to as the "military, civil, and religious" elements of the celebration were the constituent parts of major civic festivals at that time – artillery salutes from forts and warships, a military parade, a Te-Deum in the imperial chapel, a levee in the city palace (with the obligatory hand-kissing [beija-mão] ceremony), an evening theater gala, and night-time illumination of the city.

A month later, deputies likewise designated 12 October as a day of national festivity, but they had some difficulty in deciding what they were proposing to celebrate – Pedro's acclamation, his birthday, or as Nicolau Pereira de Campos Vergueiro (a deputy from São Paulo) put it, "the anniversary of the empire's acclamation or of its creation." In their congratulatory message to the monarch, deputies stressed the empire's constitutional nature, reflecting the growing tensions between that body

5
Decreto, 21 Dezembro de 1822, *CLB*. This analysis of the legislation pertaining to gala days follows the little-known pamphlet by COSTA, Luiz Monteiro da. *D. Pedro I entre o 7 de setembro e o 12 de outubro*. Salvador: Imprensa Oficial da Bahia, 1956. I thank Marco Morel for calling this text to my attention.

6
Decreto, 10 December de 1822, *CLB*.

7
"Falla com que Sua Magestade o Imperador abriu a Assembléa Geral Legislativa Constituinte no dia 3 de Maio de 1823," *CLB*.

8
Sessions of 5 and 9 de September 1823. BRASIL, *Diário da Assembléa Geral Constituinte e Legislativa do Império do Brasil, 1823*. Facsimile ed., 4 vols. in 2. Brasília: Senado Federal, 1972, vol.1, p.722, 733.

9
Condé Raguet to Secretary of State, Rio de Janeiro, 8 September 1823, NARS, T-172, roll 2.

10
Wenzel de Mareschal to Prince of Metternich, Rio de Janeiro, 30 August 1823. *RIHGB*, n.314, p.346, January-March 1977. See also Mareschal to Metternich, Rio de Janeiro, 20 September 1823. *RIHGB*, n. 315, p.308, April-June 1977.

11
"Soneto ao Faustissimo Anniversario da Independencia Brasileira," *O Sylpho*, 13 September 1823.

12

Sessions of 7, 9 and 13 October 1823. Brasil, *Diário da Assembleia*, vol.2, p.186-187, 214, 231-232.

13

FERNANDES, José Pedro. *Elogio no muito fausto natalício, e anniversario da Gloriosa acclamação de sua magestade Imperial o Senhor D. Pedro Primeiro, Imperador Constitucional e defensor perpetuo do Brasil, recitado no theatro de S. João*. Rio de Janeiro: Typ. da Silva Porto, 1823. For a description of the commemorations of 12 October 1823, see Mareschal to Metternich, Rio de Janeiro, 21 October 1823. *RIHGB*, n. 315, p.319, April-June de 1977.

14

Decisão 155 (Império), 23 October 1823; Decisão 159 (Império), 10 November 1823, *CLB*.

15

"Almanaque do Rio de Janeiro para o ano de 1824". *RIHGB*, n. 278, p.201, January-March 1968.

16

Raguet to Secretary of State, Rio de Janeiro, 12 September 1824, NARS, T-172, roll 3; *O Spectador Brasileiro*, 10 September 1824; Mareschal to Metternich, Rio de Janeiro, 18 September 1824. *RIHGB*, n. 323, p.200, April-June 1979.

17

"Rio de Janeiro, 10 September 1822 [sic]," *O Spectador Brasileiro*, 10 September 1824.

18

Decisão 210 (Guerra), 10 October 1824, *CLB*.

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Ver as listas dos despachos publicadas em *O Spectador Brasileiro*, 15 and 18 October 1824.

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Decisão 38 (Guerra), 7 March 1825; Decisão 187 (Guerra), 25 August 1825; Decisão 198 (Guerra), 5 September 1825 (Guerra), *CLB*. Costa analyzed the first two of these rulings, but was unaware of the third, *D. Pedro I*, p. 23-27.

and Pedro.¹² The day was celebrated much like 7 September and some took notice of the other day of national festivity. At the theater gala, José Pedro Fernandes recited a laudation in which he identified the Cry of Ipiranga as Brazil's founding moment: "... suddenly there appears/ Mighty Nation, healthy Empire/ In response to Pedro's voice, to the shout of 'INDEPENDENCE' / That thundered on the Ipiranga's banks" a view that would have been music to Cairú's ears.¹³ That year, and on most subsequent celebrations of 12 October, Pedro issued promotions in the armed forces and granted titles of nobility and other rewards to his subjects.

In a ruling issued on 23 October, Pedro declared 7 September and 12 October to be equal days of national festivity, thereby sanctioning the constituent assembly's intent. Sete de Setembro was described as the day "on which the said August Lord took the sublime decision to proclaim, for the first time, Brazil's independence at the place [Know as] Piranga" while 12 October was the "auspicious anniversary of H. M. the Emperor's acclamation." A few weeks later, another ruling clarified that 12 October also celebrated "Brazil's grandiose elevation to the category of Empire and ... the birthday of the same August Lord."¹⁴ Rio de Janeiro's city almanac for 1824 listed both as days of grand gala and explained their significance as outlined in the two decrees.¹⁵

Notwithstanding the 1823 rulling, 7 September remained subordinate to 12 October during the next two years. In 1824, Raguet reported that 7 September had been "announced and celebrated as the second anniversary of the Declaration of the Independence of Brazil, but certainly not with the pomp ... and magnificence" of 12 October, adding that, "in these [latter] celebrations *the people* have no part." *O Spectador Brasileiro* likewise proclaimed 7 September to be the "Anniversary of the Political Independence of the Constitutional Empire of Brazil," but no newspaper described the 1824 celebrations. In fact, there was little to describe; Mareschal reported that, for unspecified reasons, there had been no levee and beija-mão while bad weather forced the military parade's cancellation.¹⁶ By contrast, *O Spectador Brasileiro* looked forward to the "brilliant celebration" being prepared for 12 October and hoped that the day would be commemorated throughout the empire.¹⁷ The minister of war made preparations for artillery salutes up and down the coast of Rio de Janeiro and ordered the province's militia to parade as well, all in honor of Pedro's "Glorious Acclamation and of his Birthday."¹⁸ I have, unfortunately, found no descriptions of these celebrations, but as usual, Pedro issued numerous despachos (promotions and rewards).¹⁹

The three rulings regarding protocol on gala days issued by the war ministry between March and September 1825 have been taken to indicate continuing doubts about 7 September's importance but may well just reveal bureaucratic bumbling. In March, the ministry ordered that 7 September be celebrated in the same way as 25 March (the anniversary of the juramento à constituição); in other words, on these grand gala days, forts should hoist banners and fire three rounds of twenty-one salutes. This decree, however, omitted 12 October. In August, Sete de Setembro was reduced to the rank of "lesser gala," to be commemorated only with flags, while 12 October was designated a "grand gala day," to be commemorated with three salutes of 101 shots, and a great parade. Ten days later, Sete de Setembro was promoted back to the rank of grand gala, to be celebrated as mandated in the March decisão.²⁰

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Henry Chamberlain to George Canning, Rio de Janeiro, 8 September 1825, PRO/FO 13, vol.10, fol.48v; SCHLICHTHORST, C[arl] O. *O Rio de Janeiro como é, 1824-1826 (huma vez e nunca mais)*. Tradução de Emmy Dodt e Gustavo Barroso. Rio de Janeiro: Ed. Getúlio Costa, 1943, p.197.

22

Raguet to Secretary of State, Rio de Janeiro, 15 September 1825, NARS, T-172, rolo 3.

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MONTEIRO, Tobias. *História do Império: o Primeiro Reinado*. 2vols. Belo Horizonte: Itatiaia; São Paulo: EDUSP, 1982, vol.1, p.277-279, 281; LYRA, Maria de Lourdes Viana. *Memória da Independência. Marcos e representações simbólicas. Revista Brasileira de História*, São Paulo, n.29, p.190-194, 1995; SOUSA, Octávio Tarquínio de. *A vida de D. Pedro I*. 3vols. Belo Horizonte: Itatiaia; São Paulo: Edusp, 1988, vol.2, p.177, 186-189.

24

Mareschal to Metternich, Rio de Janeiro, 24 October 1825. *RIHGB*, n. 335, p.157, April-June 1982; Raguet to Secretary of State, Rio de Janeiro, 26 October 1825, NARS, M-121, roll 6; Chamberlain to Canning, Rio de Janeiro, 15 October 1824, PRO/FO 13, vol.10, fol.239.

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SCHLICHTHORST, C[arl] O. Op.Cit. p.248.

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Lei, 9 September 1826, *CLB*. This and the following paragraph are based on the debates in *Anais do Senado*, 1826, vol.1, p.85; vol.2, p.100-102; vol.3, p.14-16, p.122-129; and *Anais da Câmara dos Deputados*, 1826, vol.2, p.36; vol.3, p.262-265.

In 1825 Sete de Setembro coincided with the announcement of Brazil's recognition by Great Britain which made it possible for Carl O. Schlichthorst to declare that it was "the most important date in the history of imperial Brazil."²¹ Pedro personally handed out copies of the treaty from the palace windows before the levee and publicly removed the badge of Independence or Death that he had worn since 1822.²² French and Austrian diplomats reported little enthusiasm for these celebrations, however, for the terms of the treaty in fact undermined the principle of Pedro's position as emperor by popular acclamation.²³ The usual celebrations took place on 12 October, reported Mareschal, while Raguet referred to "great pomp," and Henry Chamberlain, the British minister, mentioned the "unprecedented concessions of favors, comprehending titles, honors, and promotions, to a degree that might almost be termed lavish."²⁴ Schlichthorst claimed that 10,000 troops paraded on the Campo de Santana, but noted that this was the last of these great military exhibitions, for most of the soldiers were shortly thereafter dispatched to Montevideo.²⁵

This exposition of the available sources on the commemoration of 7 September and 12 October in 1823-25, much of it not available to those historians who have written about the origins of Sete de Setembro, clearly reveals that, if 7 September had little importance to contemporaries in 1822, it quickly emerged as Brazil's independence day, although it remained subordinate to 12 October. The meaning of both days, however, remained unstable. Both of course focused attention on Pedro as monarch and hero, yet both also could be read as embodying popular origins for the empire. Pedro's acclamation by the people on 12 October profoundly upset the conservative Holy Alliance and complicated Brazil's search for international recognition. But the day could also be celebrated as merely Pedro's birthday or as the date on which Brazil became an empire, less problematic concepts. For 7 September to serve as Brazil's founding moment, the shout of "Independence or Death" had to resonate among the population or from the Amazon to the Plate River, a recurring trope in 7 September rhetoric. Ultimately, 7 September more readily offered a popular or populist vision of independence than 12 October, but this distinction did not become fully clear until 1830.

Legislating Days of National Festivity

In the first session of Brazil's parliament, legislators designated five days of national festivity, four of which were directly connected to Emperor Pedro I: 9 January (his 1822 decision to stay in Brazil), 25 March, 3 May (the opening day of the annual legislative session), 7 September, and 12 October.²⁶ The debates in the senate and the chamber of deputies revealed an important difference between the two houses in their views of the empire's political nature. In this debate, however, it was clear that Sete de Setembro was widely considered Brazil's independence day, but some still saw it as a relatively unimportant date in comparison to 12 October.

In the senate, the viscount of Nazaré proposed on 10 May that the 13th be declared a "national holiday" (on that date in 1822, Pedro had accepted the title of "perpetual defender"). This motion – not passed – led to a bill that proposed eight "days of national festivity": 9 January (the day of Pedro's 1822 decision to stay in Brazil, the Fico) and 22 January (the empress's birthday), 25 March, 13 May, 7 September, 12 October, and 1 December (Pedro's coronation) and 2 December (the birthday of the heir

apparent, the future Pedro II). Nazaré justified his bill on the grounds that "all nations have always recommended to posterity the notable days of their institutions." Eight holidays were too much for the viscount of Barbacena who noted that all of them referred in some way to Pedro I, so he proposed retaining only 12 October. Noting that the constituent assembly had proposed three holidays (9 January, 7 September, and 12 October),²⁷ the viscount of Caravelas defended 7 September as "the day on which the Emperor broke our prisons, the chains that tied us to Portugal, on which he declared independence, and his voice was followed by all of Brazil", and also called for the retention of 25 March. In the second reading, Barbacena's view prevailed: 12 October, he explained, "has the virtue of combining the most glorious Brazilian events." Nazaré, who missed this session, lamented in the third reading that his fellow senators "mutilated" his bill. To Barbacena's argument, he retorted that a single holiday celebrating every act of Pedro I would be a "mere fiction," and that many holidays were needed so that "future generations, hearing the salutes, seeing the flags and banners, and other demonstrations of joy appropriate to such days, would remember the glorious events that took place on them." Only with many celebrations would Brazilians remember the history of their nation, added Caravelas (now supporting Nazaré), for few men in Brazil read history books and, unlike the ancients, Brazil had no public monuments, so festivals that the population could see were essential. In the end, the senators compromised on a list of four holidays (9 January, 25 March, 7 September, and 12 October), but Nazaré, Caravelas, and four other senators recorded their votes against the bill.

The bill then went to the chamber of deputies where, amid loud cheers, Rio de Janeiro's Manoel de Souza Franco called for the addition of 3 May, the date on which, according to the constitution, parliament convened. The legislature, he stressed, was at least as important as the executive (the monarchy), celebrated in the senate's bill. São Paulo's Nicolau Pereira de Campos Vergueiro proposed an amendment dropping 25 March and 7 September and adding 3 May on the grounds that the legislature was more important than the constitution and that 7 September was only the proclamation of independence in a single province. Bernardo Pereira de Vasconcelos retorted that 3 May was to 7 September as a pygmy to a giant. Independence, he continued, was proclaimed on 7 September, fully ratified on 12 October, and sealed on 25 March with the constitution; the legislature's opening merely depended on the other three days. Moreover, adding another holiday amounted to pandering to the civil servants who would get another day off. Other deputies forcefully defended 3 May for, as one put it, independence and the constitution would have been worthless "se a representação nacional não fosse instalada." Such arguments carried the day and 3 May joined the senate's four monarchical holidays.

This debate reveals that 7 September had not yet been fully accepted as Brazil's independence day – Vergueiro, a deputy from São Paulo, could characterize it as merely a provincially-significant day – but neither he nor any other legislator offered an alternative independence day. For the senators, the monarchy was more important than the legislature, a view that deputies contested with their addition of 3 May.

The 1826 law modified the practice of civic rituals in Rio de Janeiro, and for the next few years, 7 September and 12 October were celebrated side by side with all of the same elements as in the early years of

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O Spectador Brasileiro, 7 September 1826; *Aurora Fluminense*, 12 October 1829. See also *Gazeta do Brasil*, 7 September 1827; *L'Echo de l'Amérique du Sud*, 10 September and 13 October 1827; *Astrea*, 14 October 1828; *A Luz Brasileira*, 13 October 1829; *Jornal do Commercio*, 13 October 1829. For a description of the 12 October 1829 celebrations, see HOLMAN, James. *A Voyage Round the World, Including Travels in Africa, Asia, Australasia, America, etc., etc., from MDCCCXXVII to MDCCCXXXII*. 4 vols. London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1834, vol.2, p.58-59.

29

WALSH, Robert. *Notices of Brazil in 1828 and 1829*. 2 vols. London: Frederick Westley and A. H. Davis, 1830, vol. 2, p.419.

30

Aurora Fluminense, 27 March 1829; *Jornal do Commercio*, 28 March 1829.

31

KRAAY, Hendrik. Nação, Estado e política popular no Rio de Janeiro: rituais cívicos depois da Independência. In: PAMPLONA, Marco A., and DOYLE, Don H. (eds.). *Nacionalismo no Novo Mundo*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Record, 2008, p.329-354. For a different view, see WISSER, William M. *Rhetoric and Riot in Rio de Janeiro, 1827-1831*. 2006. 265f. Thesis (Doutorado em História). University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, p.114-196.

32

Nova Luz Brasileira, 7 September 1830.

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Aurora Fluminense, 10 September 1830.

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O Brasileiro Imparcial, 7 September 1830.

Pedro's reign. Newspapers repeatedly stressed that these two holidays commemorated Pedro's creation of the Brazilian nation and his political organization of it on a constitutional basis. His was the "regenerating voice that created a Nation" on 7 September 1822, declared *O Spectador Brasileiro* in 1826. On 12 October 1829, Brazilians celebrated much more than just the birthday of an "absolutist King", explained the *Aurora Fluminense*; rather, they recalled "the triumph of the doctrines proclaimed by civilization [which] were sanctioned by the descendant of twenty monarchs."²⁸

Significantly, the other three holidays designated by law in 1826 saw little commemoration. Parliament duly convened each 3 May, but residents of the capital did not celebrate this day. Robert Walsh marveled at the "little interest" in parliament's opening in 1829,²⁹ while the anniversary of Pedro's decision to stay in Brazil passed almost unnoticed. Nor are there indications that 25 March received more than cursory attention. In 1829, the *Aurora Fluminense* noted the day with an editorial that stressed Brazil's good fortune at having a "Monarch, whom the People have chosen, [who] did not hesitate to offer up for Brazilians' approval a liberal Code, in which are engraved all of the sacred rights" that had cost so much blood to achieve elsewhere. The 1824 charter was, according to Evaristo Ferreira da Veiga, this newspaper's moderate liberal (Moderado) editor, "the most liberal of all Monarchical-Representative Constitutions." But there was apparently no public commemoration of this day other than artillery salutes.³⁰

In 1830, amid the rising tensions between Exaltados and supporters of Pedro I, the commemoration of days of national festivity completely changed in Rio de Janeiro when, for the first time, non-government groups organized civic rituals. Exaltado demonstrations on 25 March in honor of the constitution were a profound challenge to the emperor, and on 7 September, these radical liberals attempted to repeat their March success. Supporters of Pedro I responded with elaborate celebrations of his acclamation and birthday on 12 October. I have elsewhere described these celebrations and the extensive debate about them, which I will not repeat here, save to emphasize that these were political demonstrations, in which competing groups of supporters and opponents of Pedro I publicly demonstrated their views of the origins of Brazilian independence and the appropriate role of the monarch in the political order.³¹ On 7 September, the Exaltado leader, Ezequiel Corrêa dos Santos, simply ignored Pedro I and declared that nations' conquest of independence "has always been counted by them as the only day that truly belongs to the people."³² The Moderado Evaristo da Veiga declared that Pedro had followed Brazilians' lead on 7 September 1822: "He willingly embraced our cause, declared himself to also be Brazilian... and thus made himself worthy of reigning over Brazilians by the unanimous choice of our new political association."³³ Leading supporters of Pedro I, such as Joaquim José da Silva Maia, exhorted Brazilians to be worthy of the independence and institutions granted by the "most magnanimous of monarchs."³⁴ While the viscount of Cairú may have been busily constructing a conservative history of 7 September in his officially-commissioned history of independence and his view of the Grito do Ipiranga as an action of Pedro's will alone suited a conservative monarchy, as Lyra has argued, many disagreed with this view. They did not, however, reject 7 September as Brazil's independence day; rather, they subordinated Pedro to the nation in their accounts of his role in 1822.

New and Old Days of National Festivity, 1831

Pedro I abdicated on 7 April 1831 and the following 7 September celebrations were an unmistakably partisan demonstration, controlled by the Sociedade Defensora da Independência e Liberdade Nacional, characterized by its most recent historian as an alliance among divergent political groups whose goal was to "put the brakes on the insurrection" that had accompanied Pedro's abdication.³⁵ The Sociedade paid for a *Te Deum* in the São Francisco de Paula church to give thanks, as "a patriot" put it, for the "Divine protection" which freed Brazil from the "ambitions of Anarchists" and the "tyranny of a foreign despot."³⁶ Surplus funds from the Sociedade's subscription were designated for the construction of Rio de Janeiro's new prison, of which one newspaper heartily approved, "for it is certainly by promoting good customs and public morality, that we effectively work on behalf of the Nation's liberties."³⁷ Two hundred uniformed Municipal Guards (the short-lived forerunner to the National Guard) stood outside the church and Evaristo later praised the "handsome troop of citizens" who held Brazil's destiny in their hands. With nothing to gain from disorder or despotism, they were the "great secret for having liberty without anarchy, [and] order without oppression on the part of those who govern."³⁸ Apparently neither military parade nor *Te Deum* in the imperial chapel were held.

There were some doubts about the day's meaning. The *Jornal do Comércio*, while admitting that Pedro I had only placed himself at the head of the independence movement in 1822 "to better take advantage of it, and to not lose such a rich crown," nevertheless declared that 7 September 1822 marked the "first step toward Liberty." For this reason, "Sete de Setembro will always be [a day] of jubilation for good patriots."³⁹ In the same vein, Evaristo da Veiga called on "all Brazilians who love the homeland," "regardless of their political principles," to "embrace each other fraternally" on the day.⁴⁰ The *Jornal do Comércio* reported numerous "private dinners" at which "many very patriotic toasts were made to this memorable day, to Independence, to Liberty, to the Brazilian Monarch, our angel of peace, to the National Congress, to the Regency, to the Fraternal Union of all Brazilians." Both this newspaper and another lamented that the celebrations were not greater, for "the spirit of evil" had spread "terror" among residents of the capital by announcing a massacre or a "razzia" for 7 September.⁴¹

Only at the very last minute did legislators remember that the days of national festivity had been established by law back in 1826. On the eve of 12 October, the chamber of deputies hastily passed a bill that abolished the date as a day of national festivity, instituting 7 April and 2 December (Pedro II's birthday) as replacement holidays (the other four holidays approved in 1826 remained unchanged). The abdication was politely described as the day on which the crown devolved to Pedro II.⁴² The senate received the chamber's bill on 11 October and suspended its debate on the regulations for law schools to deal with the pressing issue of whether to celebrate the upcoming day of national festivity. Most agreed that it was imprudent to celebrate Pedro I's birthday, but several senators (Barbacena, Caravelas, Cairú, and Vergueiro) pointed out that 12 October was also the date of the empire's creation and, therefore, as Caravelas put it, "will last as long as the Empire lasts." When Antônio Gonçalves Gomide asserted that the empire had been founded on 7 September, Caravelas explained (correctly) that the form of government – kingdom or empire – had not been decided

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GUIMARÃES, Lucia Maria Paschoal. Liberalismo moderado: postulados ideológicos e práticas políticas no período regencial (1831-1837). In: PEIXOTO, Antonio Carlos, et al. (eds.). *O liberalismo no Brasil imperial: origens, conceitos e prática*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Revan, 2001, p.107-12; BASILE, Marcelo Otávio Neri de Campos. *O Império em construção: projetos de Brasil e ação política na Corte regencial*. 2004. 490f. Thesis (Doctorate in Social History). Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, 2004, p.83-109.

36

Jornal do Commercio, 7 September 1831. On these commemorations, see also BASILE, Marcelo Otávio Neri de Campos. Festas cívicas na Corte regencial. *Varia História*, Belo Horizonte, n.36, p.494-516, July-December 2006.

37

O Independente, 6 de September 1831. See also *Aurora Fluminense*, 5 de September 1831.

38

Aurora Fluminense, 9 September 1831.

39

Jornal do Commercio, 7 September 1831. See also *Astrea*, 6 September 1831; e *O Independente*, 9 September 1831.

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Aurora Fluminense, 5 September 1831.

41

Jornal do Commercio, 9 September 1831; *O Independente*, 9 September 1831. See also Arthur Aston to Viscount Palmerston, Rio de Janeiro, 28 September 1831, PRO/FO 13, vol. 83, fol. 286r-v.

42

Sessions of 6, 10, and 12 October, *Anais da Câmara dos Deputados*, 1831, vol. 2, p. 220, 229-230, 231.

43

Sessions of 11 October, *Anais do Senado*, 1831, vol. 2, p. 259-265.

44

Decreto, 25 October 1831, *CLB*.

45

João Loureiro to Manuel José Maria da Costa e Sá, Rio de Janeiro, 15 October 1831. *RIHGB*, n.76, p.379, 1914.

46

Little has been written about Sete de Setembro celebrations. See, however, KRAAY, Hendrik. "Sejamos brasileiros no dia da nossa nacionalidade": comemorações da Independência no Rio de Janeiro, 1840-1864. *Topoi*, Rio de Janeiro, n.14, p.9-36, January-June 2007; MOTTA, Marly Silva da. *A nação faz 100 anos: a questão nacional no centenário da Independência*. Rio de Janeiro: Editora da Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 1992, p.11-22. The debate over the inauguration of Pedro I's equestrian statue in 1862 raised many of the same questions posed by the celebration of 7 September. See, among others, RIBEIRO, Maria Eurydice de Barros. *Memória em bronze: estátua equestre de D. Pedro I*. In: KNAUSS, Paulo (ed.). *Cidade vaidosa: imagens urbanas do Rio de Janeiro*. Rio de Janeiro: Sette Letras, 1999, p.15-28; SOUZA, Lara Lis Carvalho. *Patria coroadada: o Brasil como corpo político autônomo*. São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 1998, p. 351-365. See also, OLIVEIRA, Cecília Helena de Salles, and MATTOS, Cláudia Valladão de (eds.). *O Brado do Ipiranga*. São Paulo: Editora da Universidade de São Paulo, 1999.

47

See the history of the campaign written by MELLO MORAES, Alexandre José de (father). *Monumento do Ypiranga*. *Brasil Histórico*, 17 July 1864.

48

ARMITAGE, John. *The History of Brazil from the Period of the Arrival of the Braganza Family in 1808, to the Abdication of Don Pedro the First in 1831*. 2 vols. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1836, vol.1, p.354.

49

President of Bahia to Pedro I, Salvador, 18 September 1825, Arquivo Histórico do Museu Imperial, III-POB-29.06.1825-Pl.B.c.1-16.

50

TITARA, Ladislau dos Santos. "Congratulação aos Brasileiros," 7 September 1828. In: _____. *Obras poeticas dedicadas à mocidade brasileira*. 8 vols. Salvador: Typ. Imperial e Nacional, 1827-1852, vol.2, p.96-99.

on that day. Cairú, no advocate of popular sovereignty, nevertheless added that 12 October was the "the first explicit act of the Nation's sovereignty." Such finer points of constitutional history were lost on the "rustic people," lamented Vergueiro, and the populace would simply see any celebration of 12 October as a restorationist demonstration. Senators said much less about adding 7 April to the roster of holidays. Cairú opposed it on the grounds that no monarchy had ever celebrated an abdication, but Gomide stressed that the bill proposed celebrating Pedro II's acclamation, not Pedro I's abdication, which in fact took place late on 6 April. The bill passed, and senators returned to the regulation of legal education.⁴³ The formal decree to this effect only appeared on 25 October, so 12 October thus technically remained on the books as a day of national festivity in 1831.⁴⁴ While there were no official celebrations of 12 October in the capital, one contemporary reported that some "private dinners," complete with "cheers to Pedro I," were held.⁴⁵

Conclusion

With the elimination of 12 October from the roster of days of national festivity, Sete de Setembro reigned supreme as Brazil's independence day. The meaning of Pedro I's actions at Ipiranga would continue to be debated and the commemorations of the day changed dramatically over the following decades, but 7 September never lost its place as the day on which Brazilians celebrate their nation's independence.⁴⁶

In this article, I have focused on Rio de Janeiro to the exclusion of the rest of the country, but it cannot be assumed that the early celebrations of 7 September followed the same trajectory in the provinces as they did in the capital. In São Paulo, the December 1822 proposal for the erection of a monument at Ipiranga suggest that at least some Paulistas thought Pedro's actions worthy of commemorating, even before Sete de Setembro had become important in Rio de Janeiro. Antônio da Silva Prado first proposed the erection of a monument there three months after Pedro's Cry. He quickly received approvals from the provincial and national governments to launch a public subscription. In 1825, the cornerstone for what was apparently intended to be a pyramidal obelisk was laid, but work ceased in 1828 when the subscription fell far short of the projected cost.⁴⁷ When John Armitage visited the site in 1834, he saw nothing but foundations.⁴⁸

In Bahia, the only province in whose archives I have done systematic work, there are only limited indications of Sete de Setembro commemorations during the 1820s. However, given that very few newspapers from Salvador have survived, the province is not an ideal place to research early Sete de Setembros. In the tense year of 1824, while the Confederação do Equador had not yet been defeated, Bahia's provincial president reported that he had led cheers in the theater on 7 September which "had a great impact" and "spread tranquility among all."⁴⁹ This indication that theater galas were held on 7 September is confirmed by Ladislau dos Santos Titara's later publication of a "Congratulations to Brazilians" that he recited at the gala on 7 September 1828. He hailed the Cry of Ipiranga as the origin of Brazil's constitutional regime: "Thou art the sweet source, from which came/the Liberty, and the Glory, that today happily, Beside good fortune we enjoy/ To thee sublime hymns we dedicate/And to the homeland, to Pedro the Heroi, whom we idolize."⁵⁰ By this time, however, Bahians were heavily invested in the celebration of the

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On the Bahian campaign to designate 2 July as a day of national festivity, see KRAAY, Hendrik. *Entre o Brasil e a Bahia: as comemorações do Dois de Julho em Salvador no século XIX. Afro-Ásia*, Salvador, n.23, p.74-75, 1999. On Bahian civic rituals and the limited importance given to Sete de Setembro, see also KRAAY, Hendrik. *Definindo nação e Estado: rituais cívicos na Bahia pós Independência. Topoi*, Rio de Janeiro, n.3, p.63-90, September 2001.

52

Raguet to Secretary of State, Rio de Janeiro, 23 September 1826, NARS, M-121, roll 7.

anniversary of 2 July 1823, the date on which Portuguese troops evacuated Salvador, which they sought to make into a day of national festivity.⁵¹

Titara's assessment of Sete de Setembro as the origin of Brazil's constitutional regime highlights a final important point about imperial Brazil's days of national festivity. They focused primarily on the imperial regime's political arrangements and embodied no romantic or ethnic nationalism; the nation was a political association, exclusive of course, whose principal institutions – monarchy and constitution – were established in 1822-24. Condy Raguet, probably the best-informed United States representative in Rio de Janeiro, effectively captured this when he reported to Washington that, in 1826, parliament had established five "days of political festivity," even though he certainly knew that the law designated them "days of national festivity."⁵²