

## Behind the scenes of the Sesquicentenary

The re-edition of the book *História da Independência da província do Maranhão (1822-1828)* [History of the Maranhão province independence (1822-1828)], by Luís Antônio Vieira da Silva

Detrás de escena del Sesquicentenario: la reedición del libro *História da Independência da província do Maranhão (1822-1828)*, de Luís Antônio Vieira da Silva / Nos bastidores do Sesquicentenário: a reedição do livro *História da Independência da província do Maranhão (1822-1828)*, de Luís Antônio Vieira da Silva

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### ABSTRACT

The text explores elements that formed the re-edition, in 1972, of the main book about the Independence of Maranhão, published in 1862. For this purpose, it approaches: the decision to reprint it, in the face of other possibilities situated in an atmosphere of intellectual disputes; some reading about what contributions its content provided for that moment of commemoration; and its formatting, with modifications and additions, which brought it closer to the sesquicentennial celebrations.

**Keywords:** Sesquicentenary of the Independence; Maranhão; historiography.

### RESUMEN

El texto explora elementos que formaron la edición, en 1972, del principal libro sobre la Independencia de Maranhão, publicado en 1862. Con ese fin, trata de: la decisión de reeditarlo, frente a otras posibilidades posicionadas en un ambiente de disputas intelectuales; alguna lectura sobre qué aportes brindó su contenido para aquel momento de efeméride; y el formato, con modificaciones y adiciones, que lo acercó a las celebraciones del Sesquicentenario.

**Palabras clave:** Sesquicentenario de la Independencia; Maranhão; historiografía.

### RESUMO

O texto explora elementos que conformaram a reedição, em 1972, do principal livro sobre a Independência do Maranhão, publicado em 1862. Para tanto, aborda: a decisão de reeditá-lo, ante outras possibilidades situadas em ambiente de disputas intelectuais; certa leitura sobre quais contribuições seu conteúdo ensejava para aquele momento de efeméride; e o formato, com modificações e acréscimos, que o aproximou das comemorações do Sesquicentenário.

**Palavras-chave:** Sesquicentenário da Independência; Maranhão; historiografia.

In the last two decades, a renewed historiography dedicated to the Sesquicentennial of Independence has been exploring such commemorations in different ways, but converging in the commitment to better understand the connections between that present of the “Brazilian miracle”, the forms of appropriation of a glorified past and the resources activated for the viability of a national, synchronic and sacred festival, components of the “imagined community”, thought by Benedict Anderson (2008) and present in some of these works.<sup>1</sup>

The commemorations of the Sesquicentennial of Independence, organized by the civil-military dictatorship, took shape from Decree n. 69,344, of October 8, 1971, which created a national commission for the organization of festivities, complemented by decree n. 69,922, of January 13, 1972, which established the Comissão Executiva Central (CEC) [Central Executive Commission], with the aim of coordinating activities.

The continuum of celebrations covered particularly the period between April and September 1972, a time delimited by the tributes to Tiradentes and the arrival of the Portuguese in America, and by the emancipatory act of d. Pedro I. The emperor, a character elected as the central figure of the celebrations, guided this continuum, which included: the disembarkation of his mortal remains in Rio de Janeiro, on April 22; a kind of civic pilgrimage of mortal remains through the Brazilian states; and the burial at the Ipiranga monument, on September 6, 1972, an act that would precede the grand final of the following day.<sup>2</sup>

In the meantime, a diverse set of activities was organized throughout the country through the CEC, articulated with state executive committees, as Janaína Cordeiro (2012, p. 18, emphasis added):

From the CEC, Comissões Executivas Estaduais (CEE's) [State Executive Commissions] were created, responsible for the integration of the respective states to the national events, respecting, however, the local and regional specificities, their dates and their heroes, creating milestones and encouraging the particular events of each country region [...].

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1 This renewed historiography on the subject has among its representatives: Cleodir Moraes (2006), Adjovanes Almeida (2009), Janaína Cordeiro (2012), Thaisy Sosnoski (2013) and Fabrício Moraes (2015). Benedict Anderson's book has three Brazilian editions, in 1983, 1991 and 2008.

2 The request for the transfer of the emperor's remains deposited in Portugal was made by the Brazilian government in July 1971. Both moments, disembarkation and burial, had the participation of the two greatest political authorities in Portugal, respectively, President Américo Tomás and the head of government, Marcelo Caetano. A description of this participation can be found in José Calvet de Magalhães (1997, p. 90-91). For an official systematization of the work of the CEC, see the report by General Antônio Jorge Correia (1972), who chaired the commission.

Regarding “local specificities”, a notion that includes infinite possibilities, observable through the proportion/scope that the festivities took, it is worth remembering that for some of the then northern provinces the event entailed a certain discomfort and the need for a “chronological adjustment” in compared to September 1822, superimposed on July/August 1823, time of incorporation of the provinces of Bahia, Maranhão and Grão-Pará.<sup>3</sup>

In Maranhão, Independence celebrations included the inauguration of stretches of major works, such as the Trans-Amazonian highway – a symbol of national integration that was being promoted –, and moments of broad mobilization, such as the one caused by the presence of the emperor’s mortal remains in the city of São Luís, on the 13th, 14th and 15th of July. It also included a momentary impulse to the historiographical production on the subject, until then secondary, with the edition or re-edition of three works directly motivated by the event: *História da Independência no Maranhão* [History of Maranhão Independence] and *Símbolos nacionais do Brasil e estaduais do Maranhão* [National Symbols of Brazil and State of Maranhão], both written by Mário Meireles; and the *História da Independência da província do Maranhão (1822-1828)* [History of the Province of Maranhão Independence (1822-1828)], first published by Luís Antônio Vieira da Silva, in 1862.<sup>4</sup>

Meireles was a leading figure in Maranhão historiography. Author of *História do Maranhão* [Maranhão History], in 1960, a compendium that would record his name as the main historian of that generation, he also stood out in another event: the 350th anniversary of the “French foundation” of Maranhão, celebrated in 1962.<sup>5</sup> However, his *História da Independência* (1972b) was largely indebted to the narrative formatted by Vieira da Silva, the first major work

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3 Regarding the passage of the emperor’s remains through Bahia, Janaína Cordeiro (2012, p. 77-79) noted the lack of enthusiasm among the population, even with the organizers’ expedient to make it coincide with the 2nd of July, the landmark of the incorporation from Bahia to the Empire of Brazil in 1823 and an important local holiday. About Pará, Cleodir Moraes (2006) pointed to the articulations between the “two sesquicentennials”, in 1972 and 1973.

4 The book *Símbolos nacionais* was included in the event circuit not because it addresses the issue of Independence, but because it exalts patriotic symbols, also from a state perspective. In the paratext, one can read: “Commemorative edition of the Sesquicentennial of the Independence of Brazil. September 7, 1972” (Meireles, 1972a). In the same context, the CEC published the book *Símbolos nacionais e bandeiras históricas do Brasil* [National Symbols and Historical Flags of Brazil] (Comissão, 1972).

5 For that moment, and as president of Academia Maranhense de Letras [Maranhão’s Academy of Letters], Meireles published the book *França Equinocial* [Equinoctial France (1962)] and was actively involved in the celebrations. An essay on the character, including the information used here, can be consulted in Regina Helena Martins de Faria (2014, p. 219-238). At the time of the Sesquicentennial, Meireles held positions and was present at the festivities, a theme taken up again later.

on the subject and the only one up until that time.<sup>6</sup> Reediting Vieira da Silva's book, with some adjustments, seemed to be the most effective way of inserting Maranhão into the bibliography motivated by the Sesquicentennial.<sup>7</sup>

In this scenario, the Superintendência de Desenvolvimento do Maranhão (Sudema) [Superintendence of Development of Maranhão], which at that time edited the São Luís Collection, responsible for the re-edition of rare works, included Vieira da Silva's book in its list of publications. The *História da Independência* was published as volume 4 of the collection.<sup>8</sup>

For the limits of this work, I intend to explore the backstage that shaped the re-edition of Vieira da Silva's work:<sup>9</sup> the decision to re-edit it, in the face of other possibilities situated in an environment of intellectual disputes; a certain reading about what contributions its content provided for that event; and the format that the book took on, with modifications and additions that brought it closer to the atmosphere of the Sesquicentennial celebrations. For that, I resort primarily to private correspondence, belonging to Benedito Buzar,<sup>10</sup> the Sudema's chief of staff at that time,<sup>11</sup> letters assembled sent to him by Raimundo Nonato Cardoso,<sup>12</sup> responsible for operationalizing the reissues promoted by the São Luís Collection, in Rio de Janeiro.<sup>13</sup> *Pari passu*, I consider the inter-

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6 A relational analysis of the two works was carried out by Felipe Ucijara Mendes (2010).

7 The Conselho Federal de Cultura (CFC) [Federal Council of Culture] and the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro (IHGB) [Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute] formed the Comissão Nacional [National Commission] and, in the CEC, integrated the [Subcomissão de Assuntos Culturais [Subcommittee on Cultural Affairs]. Not by chance, the festivities made extensive use of a 19th-century historiographical tradition, materialized in a series of speeches and published books, such as the Biblioteca do Sesquicentenário [Sesquicentennial Library], comprising eighteen volumes, in a partnership between the CEC and the IHGB. For the composition of the library, see Thaisy Sosnoski (2013).

8 In another context, in the same year, the book *Símbolos nacionais*, by Mário Meireles, was published as volume 5 of the collection.

9 It is not, therefore, a text focused on the analysis of Vieira da Silva's book, or on the author's trajectory, purposes that guided the work of Marcelo Cheche Galves and Felipe Ucijara Mendes (2014).

10 Benedito Bogéa Buzar was a state deputy, impeached in 1964. Subsequently, and for decades, he held positions in various state secretariats in Maranhão. He is currently the president of Academia Maranhense de Letras.

11 Buzar was the only chief of staff during the agency's existence, from 1966 to 1972.

12 There is little information about Cardoso. Born in Maranhão, he lived most of his life in Rio de Janeiro. He worked in the Press Service of the Instituto Nacional de Previdência Social (INPS) [National Institute of Social Security] and in some newspapers. More than operationalizing the publications, he wrote book flaps and prefaces to the works, revised them, added notes and documents. His texts demonstrate great knowledge about documents / works related to Maranhão. Some biographical data can be consulted in Jucey Santana (2016, p. 234).

13 The mailing covers only the period between July 14, 1971 and July 25, 1972 and is comprised by about thirty letters from Cardoso addressed to Buzar and other state authorities; there are also some mailing exchanged with the owners of the printers responsible for the publications of the São Luís Collection

views<sup>14</sup> carried out with Buzar himself, and with Joaquim Salles de Oliveira Itapary Filho and Celso Antônio Lago Beckman, who held the position of superintendent of Sudema during the terms of José Sarney (1966-1970), Antônio Dino (1970-1971) and Pedro Neiva de Santana (1971-1975).<sup>15</sup>

### The São Luís Collection: planning, progress (and Independence)

In a message to Maranhão Legislative Assembly, at the beginning of 1967, Governor José Sarney (1966-1970) praised, among the accomplishments of the previous year, the creation of Sudema, “where he managed to gather a group of highly qualified technicians for the task of plan the progress of the state [...]”.<sup>16</sup> Quickly, as the messages to the Legislative Assembly in the years of 1967 and 1968 show, Sudema assumed a wide range of responsibilities, concentrated budgetary resources and guided the activities of several state entities.

In that scenario, the perspective of planning and progress was strongly influenced by the idea that actions should be supported by systematized information on a diverse field of interests. The Superintendência do Desenvolvimento do Nordeste (Sudene) [Superintendence for the Development of the Northeast], Joaquim Itapary’s original body, founded its library in 1960, in the city of Recife, with the broader purpose of “preserving institutional memory and subsidizing the activities carried out by the institution’s technical staff in the elaboration, analysis and execution of the plans and programs, considered to be of interest for regional development”.<sup>17</sup> Thinking now in state terms, it was necessary to “know Maranhão”.<sup>18</sup>

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and other printed matter belonging to the government of Maranhão. The documents were kindly made available to me by Benedito Buzar, to whom I thank.

<sup>14</sup> And also, more sporadically, news published in São Luís periodicals related to the Sesquicentennial agenda.

<sup>15</sup> Itapary came from Sudene and was assigned to the state government, along with other technicians, at the beginning of José Sarney’s administration, when he participated in the strategic planning that would result in the creation of Sudema. In the mid-1970s, he was replaced by Celso Beckman, who has also been a member of the organ’s staff since its creation. Joaquim Itapary, interview, 5 Dec. 2020.

<sup>16</sup> Message to the Legislative Assembly presented by Governor Dr. José Sarney Costa on the occasion of the opening of the 1967 legislative session, p. 5. Sudema was created by law n. 2669, of July 29, 1966. Benedito Leite Public Library (BPBL), São Luís, Maranhão, digital collection. Available in: [http://casas.cultura.ma.gov.br/portal/sgc/modulos/sgc\\_bpbl/acervo\\_digital/arq\\_ad/20150902143306.pdf](http://casas.cultura.ma.gov.br/portal/sgc/modulos/sgc_bpbl/acervo_digital/arq_ad/20150902143306.pdf). Accessed on: 8 Feb. 2022.

<sup>17</sup> Celso Furtado Library. Available in: <http://antigo.sudene.gov.br/sobre-a-biblioteca-celso-furtado>. Accessed on: 20 Feb. 2022.

<sup>18</sup> Point highlighted in the interviews of Joaquim Itapary (5 Dec. 2020) and Celso Beckman (11 Mar. 2021).

In this sense, Joaquim Itapary reported on the work he started to collect “everything that existed”, a perspective that included old books and statistics, an initial way of facing the “lack of historical, geographic and social information”. On another front, the dissemination of data and interpretations about Maranhão motivated the creation of the São Luís Collection.

If the collections published at that time in cities like São Paulo reflected the vigor of intellectual fields in the process of professionalization, mixed with new editions of rare, out-of-print works, the São Luís Collection initially focused on the re-edition of works considered to be of reference for Maranhão historiography. In Maranhão, such professionalization would occur much later.<sup>19</sup>

Itapary also highlighted the difficulty of access, at the time, to a set of titles about Maranhão, some of them accessible only at the Biblioteca Nacional [National Library], in Rio de Janeiro. Although without specifying the criteria for the choice of the first reprints – other rare works, also important, could have been chosen –, the fact is that, in 1970, the first three volumes of the collection were published: *Compêndio histórico político dos princípios da lavoura do Maranhão* [A political historic compendium of the principles of farming in Maranhão], by Raimundo Gaioso (1818); *Uma região tropical* [A tropical region], by Raimundo Lopes (1916); and the *Dicionário histórico-geográfico da província do Maranhão* [Historical-Geographic Dictionary of the Province of Maranhão], by César Marques (1870).<sup>20</sup>

The exiting of José Sarney from the government, in the mid-1970s, to run for a seat in the Senate<sup>21</sup> brought about changes in Sudema. The looming succession issue caused dissension in his government base, motivated by the support given to Pedro Neiva de Santana, then Finance Secretary, to be chosen by the State Assembly, with the agreement of President Medici. Pedro Neiva had had a disagreement with Sudema’s technicians since its creation;<sup>22</sup> the prefer-

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19 The aforementioned work by Regina Faria (2014), on Mário Meireles, offers important clues about the author’s self-taught education (common at the time), the main reference in Maranhão historiography, until at least the 1980s/1990s.

20 The collection of Benedito Buzar (ABB) suggests that the first copies of the dictionary were only ready at the end of 1971. The problems with Cia. Editora Fon Fon (Publishing House Fon Fon) and Seleta (RJ), who also printed *Uma região tropical*, were up until May 1972. The editor in charge was “Jânio”, whom Buzar explained to me that was the journalist Jânio de Freitas. Benedito Buzar, interview, 8 Jan. 2021.

21 I remember that in 1970 there were direct elections for Legislative positions and indirect elections for Executive positions.

22 As Finance secretary, Pedro Neiva was uncomfortable with the power of the new agency, especially related to budget planning and execution.

ence for his name already signaled the weakening of the agency. Upon succeeding Sarney, vice-governor Antônio Dino (1970-1971) replaced Joaquim Itapary by Celso Beckman in the superintendence.

It is not the purpose here to explore the reasons, nor the consequences, of the changes experienced by Sudema at that time. However, it is worth noting the gradual emptying of the agency's functions and, moreover, a certain lack of interest in continuing the São Luís Collection, possibly in face of the Sesquicentennial agenda, a topic explored below.

### Behind the scenes of the reissue

The correspondence analyzed, which began on July 14, 1971, makes no mention of publication projects – future or in progress – within the scope of the São Luís Collection, until January 1972. Cardoso frequently reported to Buzar the delays and technical problems with the publication of the *Dicionário histórico-geográfico*; he also reported on the delivery of the last copies of *Uma região tropical*.

The only novelty, in terms of titles in the collection, was Cardoso's insistent demand for the publication of the *Índice do dicionário histórico-geográfico* [Index of the Historical-Geographic Dictionary] and the work of Antônio Lopes on the same work, initially planned to be part of the re-edition of the dictionary; later, included in the demand for new publications the *Bibliografia e o documentário do Maranhão no Rio de Janeiro* [Bibliography and the documentary of Maranhão in Rio de Janeiro], reference not found.<sup>23</sup> The correspondence also demonstrates that Cardoso was responsible for other publications linked to Sudema, such as the *Plano de governo (1971-1974)* [Govern Plan (1971-1974)]<sup>24</sup> and the *Yearbook*, from 1971, a probable allusion to systematized information about Maranhão, to be published in the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE) [Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics] yearbook.<sup>25</sup>

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23 The index was prepared by Cardoso; on the other hand, the work of the writer Antônio Lopes was carried out with the (unrealized) intention of publishing a second edition of the dictionary, at the end of the 1940s. Two works were still part of it, together with the *Bibliografia da história do Maranhão* [Bibliography of the history of Maranhão], which reported having the collaboration of Domingos Vieira Filho, director of the Departamento de Cultura [Department of Culture] in the José Sarney government.

24 Printed in two volumes by Cia. Editora Americana, based in Rio de Janeiro. I had access to copies in Benedito Buzar's private library.

25 The correspondence also surfaces Cardoso's work with the Maranhão government office located in downtown Rio de Janeiro (at rua México, later at rua Senador Dantas), at the time headed by Raimundo Alves Maranhão. Former federal capital, Rio de Janeiro still functioned as a place for meetings amongst authorities, commonly held in the Monroe Palace, former Senate building, close to the Maranhão government office.

The probable inexistence of publishing projects in progress and the later choice of Vieira da Silva's work to continue the collection indicate not only the weight of the Sesquicentennial agenda for that moment, but also the hypothesis that the collection owes to the event its surviving.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, a new edition by Vieira da Silva did not exactly fulfill the previous purpose of the collection, of publishing works that subsidize the historical understanding of the formation of Maranhão. Of great contribution and originality on the theme of Independence in the province, the book does not propose to produce a more structural interpretation of the place occupied by the territory at that moment of ruptures in the Luso-Brazilian world.<sup>27</sup> Basically, it presents a history of the war in the province, based on documents preserved at Maranhão.<sup>28</sup> Evidently, if the decision was made for a reprint related to the Independence, Vieira da Silva's work would have no competition.

In the correspondence of January 19, 1972, there is the first reference, still generic, to a "publication on Independence".<sup>29</sup> Encouraged by the news he claimed to have received, Cardoso asked Buzar for resources for "photocopies and printing blocks", and a person to research "in the library" or "anywhere else [in Maranhão]".<sup>30</sup>

At the helm of the collection in Rio de Janeiro, Cardoso was, as already informed, much more than a technical person in charge of the editions, which

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26 As a counterpoint to the considerations that follow, I record that Joaquim Itapary stated that the decision to publish Vieira da Silva's book had been taken during his administration (1966-1970), without any relation to the Sesquicentennial, and that it was motivated by the importance of work to understand Maranhão. Joaquim Itapary, interview, 5 Dec. 2020.

27 On the structure of the narrative, focused in 1823, but dealing backwards until 1819 and forwards until 1828, see Marcelo Cheche Galves and Felipe Ucijara Mendes (2014).

28 In a letter written to César Marques in 1870, Vieira da Silva states that he began to collect documents in São Luís in 1854, when he was head of the provincial Government Secretariat. The book was published, in Maranhão, during his first term as deputy general (1861-1863), in Rio de Janeiro. Between 1861 and 1889, Vieira da Silva held positions, at court and in the provinces, almost uninterruptedly (Galves; Mendes, 2014).

29 Shortly before, the newspaper *O Imparcial* [The Impartial] reported the launch of the *História da Independência no Maranhão*, by Mário Meireles, "a scientific work of the highest expression". *O Imparcial*, n. 17.198, 9 Jan. 1972, p. 14. BPBL, São Luís, Maranhão, periodical section. Perhaps this initiative has motivated or accelerated the conversations for another publication on the topic. Meireles' book was published in Rio de Janeiro, by the publishing house Artenova, belonging to a "friend of Sarney", see: Cezar Motta (2020, p. 120).

30 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Jan. 19, 1972. These are two similar correspondences, with the same date. One handwritten and the other, as usual, typewritten. In the second, Cardoso reported that the first note had been written in a hurry, at the Biblioteca Nacional, so as not to lose the post service. It is possible that he had already started the research work with the collections. To the demand for "photocopy and printing blocks", common in the correspondence, was followed by the request for "expenses with microfilm".

relied on his work in drafting notes, corrections and document additions.<sup>31</sup> To the second edition of Vieira da Silva's book, copied from a copy in the Biblioteca Nacional,<sup>32</sup> added a large amount of documents, as will be seen. Regarding the research to be carried out in Maranhão to increase this new edition, it does not seem to have been carried out. Among the pre-textual elements that composed the reprint, there is a statement from Cardoso, on behalf of Sudema, informing that “for this work, determined by Sudema, only the historical documentation of Maranhão was researched, which is in the Arquivo Nacional [Brazil's National Archives] in the Biblioteca Nacional and at the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro” (emphasis added). The underlined caveat and the silence in the rest of the correspondence reinforce this hypothesis.

In any case, and still without defining which work would be published, Cardoso took other measures. In the same week, he asked “Hadade”<sup>33</sup> “two budgets for the book that Sudema is able to present for the Independence celebrations” and demanded that the book be ready in July.<sup>34</sup> Here, the intention to launch it during the passage of the emperor's remains through São Luís is evident, scheduled for the 13th, 14th and 15th of July – a recurring issue in the following correspondences and also in the final product presented, as will be seen.

The first explicit reference to the reprint by Vieira da Silva appears in correspondence from early February 1972, when Cardoso defended the idea with Buzar:

As for the planned publication of the Independence, only today, as I told you, I would give my vote on what we would have to do, within the line of reissues that Sudema has been doing since Gaioso. I expressed my point of view to Dr. Celso [Beckman] and I repeat it here: Luís Antônio Vieira da Silva is one of the best names of a good time of the Second Empire, in Maranhão. It was he who wrote the best we still have

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31 It is worth adding the memory of Sudema's superintendents about their work. Joaquim Itapary mentioned him as the “head of publications”; according to Celso Beckman, Cardoso “took care of everything”. Interviews granted, respectively, on December 5, 2020 and March 11, 2021.

32 Only volume 1, by Raimundo Gaioso, was published in facsimile.

33 Responsible for Cia. Editora Americana, which printed the book by Raimundo Gaioso (volume 1 of the collection) and would print the work of Vieira da Silva. The publisher also published the subsequent volume of the collection (*Símbolos nacionais*, by Mário Meireles) and *Plano de governo* (1971-1974). References to “Hadade” are quite common in the correspondence.

34 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Jan. 25, 1972.

about the history of the Independence of the state (*História da Independência da Província do Maranhão – 1862*) and it seems opportune, essential that Sudema renew this publication, especially now [...].<sup>35</sup>

Then, he gave clues about how he envisioned this second edition and showed that the research work, in progress in the collections of Rio de Janeiro, aimed to add documents and images to this work, specifically:

This book, which would not last four hundred pages, includes, however, the transcription of important historical documents that are not, nevertheless, the most important of this political period in Maranhão and can only be found, more easily, here in Rio de Janeiro. The dissemination of these pieces, all unpublished, interesting, remarkable [...] and everything else that can be found in terms of figures and a good study of Cochrane and its interaction in the province, with the presentation of documents, also unpublished, will not I know if there can be anything more timely, more brilliant [...]. And everything I have ready is “lined up” in this sense, this work being all the more recommendable because we don’t have more time for perhaps deeper work [...].<sup>36</sup>

Still in February, and already in the midst of preparing for the new edition, Cardoso made more pragmatic considerations about Vieira da Silva’s book and participation of Maranhão in the Sesquicentennial: “It is not a good book, but it is the only one we have on the Independence in Maranhão and this excites me a lot [...] in any case, we will not be behind the other states in the September celebrations”.<sup>37</sup>

As obvious as Vieira da Silva’s choice may seem – after all, it was the only major work on Independence in Maranhão –, the correspondence sequence reveals the criticism of the publication, accompanied by a set of superficial impressions about the work, a backdrop disputes in the intellectual environment of Maranhão approached here.

Before proceeding, it should be noted that the use of this private correspondence, basically composed of records produced by Cardoso – Buzar’s answers,

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<sup>35</sup> ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Feb. 2, 1972. In this correspondence, Cardoso summarizes the conversation he had in Rio de Janeiro with Celso Beckman, the then superintendent of Sudema.

<sup>36</sup> ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Feb. 2, 1972. On several occasions since the end of January, Cardoso stressed the importance of releasing resources that would enable the inclusion of documents and pictures in the book to be published.

<sup>37</sup> ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Feb. 25, 1972. As already pointed out, concerns about “September” were anticipated by preparations for “July”.

for example, were not preserved –, can lead to the mistaken conclusion about the protagonist’s role in choosing the title to be published. Evidently, if he was not a “mere technician”, Cardoso also did not have this power of choice, which involved a broader set of power relations, not always captured from the available documentation. Therefore, the correspondence points, above all, to the ongoing interlocutions and tensions.

The first time he defended Vieira da Silva’s publication, Cardoso said in passing that to give an opinion on this “it would be enough to listen to Sarney and Domingos”.<sup>38</sup> Throughout February, the decision to republish the work was criticized by figures close to Governor Pedro Neiva de Santana. In a letter addressed to Buzar, Cardoso recounted a conversation he had with the governor, in Rio de Janeiro, in which other possibilities were raised.<sup>39</sup>

About Vieira da Silva’s book, Odylo Costa Filho<sup>40</sup> would have told the governor that it was “very boring”; criticism added to the governor’s (quick) reading of the book – I don’t know under what conditions –, which led him to conclude that it is all “about Fidié, from Piauí”.<sup>41</sup> The recording of this part of the conversation served to numerous considerations by Cardoso about the intellectual environment of Maranhão, with harsh criticism of Odylo,<sup>42</sup> extended

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38 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Feb. 2, 1972. It refers to Domingos Vieira Filho, a character already presented. Buzar reported on the longevity of relations between Sarney and Cardoso, and that some speeches given by Sarney were prepared by Cardoso. Benedito Buzar, interview, 8 Dec. 2020. In the correspondence, Cardoso referred to an invitation he would have received from Sarney, already a senator, to work on a congressional publication. ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Jul. 4 and Jul. 13, 1972.

39 The following considerations take as reference two letters, written on the same date. ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Feb. 26, 1972.

40 Journalist and writer, he was a figure of great transit in the political and literary circles of Maranhão and Rio de Janeiro. At that time, he was José Sarney’s alternate in the Senate; in 1970, he had taken a seat at the Academia Brasileira de Letras (ABL) [Brazilian Academy of Letters], at which time he was already a member of the Academia Maranhense de Letras (AML).

41 As already noted, it is largely a “history of war” in the province, fought on the eastern border and its surroundings, from the advance of independence troops from Ceará and Piauí. Therefore, a careless reading can conclude by the “protagonism of Piauí”, reinforced by the displacement of the governor of arms João José da Cunha Fidié, defeated in that province, to the village of Caxias, in Maranhão, where he led the resistance to the independentists.

42 Cardoso seemed to believe that Odylo had wanted, from the beginning, his place at the head of operations related to the São Luís Collection. Not exactly as an “executor of tasks”, but as an author of notes, prefaces, in short, intellectual activities that would reinforce his status as a representative of the literature of Maranhão. This hypothesis is difficult to prove, but I record that Buzar reported the possibility of “pressure from Odylo and Josué against Cardoso”. Benedito Buzar, interview, Dec. 8, 2020.

to Josué Montello<sup>43</sup> and Mário Meireles.<sup>44</sup> These figures would lack the taste for research, for the reassembly of the “origin of historical truth”, an assertion that supported the presentation of a series of mistakes they would have made in their books, or in conversations with authorities and other intellectuals.

With the reissue of Vieira da Silva in doubt, Cardoso reported that the conversation turned to alternatives such as a new edition of *Annals*, by Berredo,<sup>45</sup> and the elaboration of a contest for the choice of a new publication on the subject.

Regarding the first hypothesis, he ironically conjectured who would be “more boring”: Vieira da Silva or Berredo, the “most stilted man who has ever written about history?” Furthermore, the idea of re-editing Berredo did not seem to be supported by a more elaborate perception of his contribution: the argument used was that the then First Lady Eney Tavares de Santana would be his descendant...<sup>46</sup>

As for the contest, Cardoso’s criticisms focused on possible favoritism maneuvers, and mainly on the quality and originality of a work that ought to be ready by July. On this regard, the question remains whether the contest organized shortly after by the Academia Maranhense de Letras (AML)<sup>47</sup> – who had Odylo Costa Filho among its members – is the same glimpsed in this conversation. In any case, as is known, this initiative did not change Sudema’s choice of Vieira da Silva’s book.

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43 ABL member since 1954, Montello occupied a prominent place in the Sesquicentennial celebrations. He chaired the Comissão de História Cultural [Cultural History Commission] of the Congresso de História da Independência [Independence History Congress] and coordinated the publication of the *História da Independência do Brasil* [History of Independence of Brazil], two IHGB initiatives. However, Cardoso’s criticisms did not refer to this performance and will not be explored here.

44 In addition to complaining about the lack of originality of some of his writings, Cardoso criticized the fact that Meireles described Cochrane as “infamous”, in a probable reference to an excerpt from the book *História do Maranhão*, published in 1960, but quoted by Cardoso as being of 1964. Discussion involving Admiral Cochrane will be taken up later.

45 Bernardo Pereira de Berredo ruled Maranhão between 1718 and 1722; in 1749, he published in Lisbon the *Anais históricos do estado de Maranhão* [Historical Annals of the State of Maranhão]. The first Brazilian edition, and the only one up to that moment, dates from 1859.

46 Even so, the hypothesis of the re-edition, which did not materialize, had some parallel unfolding to the work for the new edition of Vieira da Silva. At the end of March, Cardoso informed Buzar that the superintendent had privately asked him to provide a budget for the printing of Berredo’s book. ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Mar. 23, 1972. About the First Lady’s descent, I got no further information.

47 During the month of April 1972, *O Imparcial* gave wide publicity to the Independency Literary Contest, which would award the best works on the subject. The delivery of the awards and certificates by AML was scheduled for September 1st – and not July, which suggests that it was another initiative. Furthermore, I found no records in the local press that the award took place. *O Imparcial*, issues of April 13, 16, 19 and 25, 1972. BPBL, São Luís, Maranhão, periodical section.

Still, disputes over the title to be published seem to have brought the project to a halt. On March 7, Cardoso informed Buzar of the resumption of work, “stopped since February 26”.<sup>48</sup>

### In between one hundred and ten years, the two editions

Vieira da Silva’s book published by Sudema considerably expanded the original content, with the addition of documents and the introduction of figures, as Cardoso wanted – even before the definition of the title to be published. In defending the printing of the work, in a letter dated February 2, Cardoso argued that “it would not be four hundred pages”; months later, a book with six hundred pages would come to light.<sup>49</sup>

Before dealing with the documentary additions, it should be noted that the option not to publish a facsimile copy<sup>50</sup> added to the work other possibilities, present here, such as the separation/joining of sentences, alteration in the composition of paragraphs, grammatical updating, small changes in style and the significant addition of one hundred and fifty-three notes.<sup>51</sup> Basically, the notes had an explanatory, bibliographic,<sup>52</sup> or, and mainly, they referred to the consulted archives and/or to the documents added as an appendix to the book. In the first edition, the appendix consisted of fifteen documents; now it was ninety-nine.<sup>53</sup>

As already noted in a correspondence from early February 1972, Cardoso recognized the importance of the documents transcribed in the first edition, but noted that they were not “the most important of this political period

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48 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Mar. 7, 1972. The order to resume was given in a telegram from Superintendent Celso Beckman.

49 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Feb. 2, 1972. The first edition has just over four hundred pages.

50 I remember that only Gaioso’s book, published as volume 1 of the collection, was published in facsimile. The issue, apparently technical, had a broader dimension, as it altered the role played by Cardoso in the reissued works. In the complaints against Odylo, forwarded to Buzar, Cardoso says he feels offended by a comment made by him, in his presence, when he learned that Gaioso’s book would be a facsimile: “Then there is no danger”. ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Feb. 26, 1972.

51 Feature not available in the first edition.

52 The authors consulted by Cardoso, as well as the periodicals, were added to the bibliography of the second edition without indications that distinguish them.

53 The fifteen documents received in the second edition, respectively, the following numbering: 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 75, 76, 79, 80, 81, 82, 98, 99. Document number 52, originally indicated as number 2, it featured an oath of office, and was replaced by six editions of the *Gazeta Extraordinária do Governo da Província do Maranhão* [Maranhão Provincial Government Gazette], which includes an extract from the aforementioned document. Cardoso also added an index of the documents organized in alphabetical order, by author’s name.

in Maranhão and can only be found, more easily, here in Rio de Janeiro”.<sup>54</sup> Evidently, the criteria used by Cardoso to assess the importance of this or that document are not being discussed here – a task, in itself, dubious – but, regarding the location of the documents, it should be noted that the appendix of the first edition was composed entirely of documents unreferenced and possibly from provincial government agencies and from newspapers in circulation in São Luís in the 1820s.<sup>55</sup> Now, Cardoso added to this universe a series of documents preserved by the Arquivo Nacional, Biblioteca Nacional and IHGB, duly referenced and accompanied, almost always, by a menu.<sup>56</sup>

In general terms, documents such as decrees, official letters, ordinances, letters patent, royal provisions, oath records, private letters and correspondence exchanged between provincial authorities (Maranhão, Piauí and Ceará) were included,<sup>57</sup> besides Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro.<sup>58</sup> In addition, the edition included a facsimile of a political pamphlet, in addition to the six editions of *Maranhão Provincial Government Gazette*, published in August 1823.<sup>59</sup>

About the figures that composed the second edition,<sup>60</sup> a recurring theme in the correspondence used here, Cardoso had expressed, at the end of January 1972, the desire to “dig up photos of all these people, especially here [in Rio de Janeiro]”, in a reference to the personages of Independence in Maranhão, according to him still little known.<sup>61</sup>

In fact, among the 16 images added, not always articulated to the contents of the excerpts in which they were inserted, there are seven portraits of civil and military authorities from Maranhão and Piauí, a number perhaps smaller

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54 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Feb. 2, 1972.

55 Marcelo Cheche Galves and Felipe Ucijara Mendes (2014), in a work on the author and the book, did not have access at that time to the first edition, which led to the error of considering that the documents preserved in the archives of Rio de Janeiro were part of its appendix.

56 Eventually, he resorted to extracts from these documents, accessed through the bibliography he consulted.

57 These are correspondences from emissaries of the Confederation of Ecuador.

58 The documentation included covers the period from 1812 to 1825. Regarding the documents from the first edition, the last one dates from 1828, possibly as a way of demarcating the time frame, announced from the title.

59 Almost all of the attached documents were transcribed by Cardoso. In addition to the pamphlet and the periodical, he used the facsimile only in the annex to document number 20, referring to the deed of patrimony in the village of Itapecuru-Mirim. On the back cover, it included the facsimile of the signatures of the members of the first Maranhão Board of Government after Independence.

60 Nonexistent in the first edition.

61 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Jan. 28, 1972.

than initially desired; another highlight is the reproduction of six images, referring to five newspapers printed in São Luís in the 1820s.<sup>62</sup>

Still on the images, the paratext included a portrait of Luís Antônio Vieira da Silva and, importantly, a portrait of D. Pedro I,<sup>63</sup> accompanied by the caption “Among the papers in the history of the Independence of Brazil, there is evidence that the emperor d. Pedro I was particularly concerned with the province of Maranhão” (Vieira da Silva, 1972), a notion that seems to have also guided the choice of some documents. As already pointed out, d. Pedro I had been elected by the civil-military dictatorship as the central character of the festivities, and Cardoso’s choices were aligned with this purpose.

As for other pre-textual elements, Cardoso produced, under the title “Notas” [“Notes”], a formal text, praising Vieira da Silva’s political trajectory and biographical information that linked him to the main families of the land. Only in two moments was some more critical consideration of the work allowed, without first emphasizing that, more than a hundred years later, it remained “the source of all the knowledge that has been demanded about this part of the history of the province” (Cardoso, 1972, p. 11).

Thus, he observed that Vieira da Silva had avoided delving into issues that would lead to clashes against the Portuguese, who were still present in Maranhão – in the times of Vieira da Silva and Cardoso, an issue taken up later. In this regard, he noted that “even today, no historian from Maranhão would be able to strike Portugal without striking himself [...]” (Cardoso, 1972, p. 10), an assertion indirectly taken up on the last page of the note, when he put forward the hypothesis that circumstances had imposed many omissions on the author.<sup>64</sup>

However, in the opposite direction, a “Maranhão brasileiro” [“Brazilian Maranhão”] emerges from the book flap, also written by Cardoso. Here, the “national past”, in circular effect, goes back to the Beckman Revolt, passes through Independence, and reaches the Sesquicentennial:

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62 Interestingly, the book included the first page of the latest edition of the newspaper *O Conciliador* [The Conciliator], n. 212, of July 23, 1823 (p. 125). This edition does not exist in the current collection of the Biblioteca Nacional (which ends at number 210), nor was located in another archive. For this reason, the book is commonly cited as a reference for the existence of the last two editions of the newspaper.

63 Dom Pedro I, constitutional emperor and perpetual defender of Brazil. Oil painting by Simplicio Rodrigues de Sá, painter at the Imperial Chamber of H.M., made in Rio de Janeiro in 1828. Image by Edward Smith, in Liverpool, 1827.

64 On page 227 (note 92) Cardoso added a rare critical note to the book, regarding the omissions practiced by Vieira da Silva.

Associating itself with the commemorations with which the country marks the 150th anniversary of its political emancipation, and at the very moment the mortal remains of the founder of the Empire transferred from Portugal arrive in Maranhão, on a civic pilgrimage and are veiled by the people, whose ancestors were so distinguished in the struggle for Brazilian unity, from the economic-nativist movement of 1684, with Bequimão [Beckman], to the civil war of 1822-1823 [...]. This book is, above all, a documentary [...] the highest and most serious record of the separatist protest in Maranhão. (Cardoso, 1972)

Finally, if the new edition contemplated the intentions expressed by Cardoso since February 1972 (notes, documents, images...), one task was not accomplished: the inclusion of “a good study on Cochrane and its performance in the province, with the presentation of documents, also unpublished [...]”.<sup>65</sup> The reason for this absence can perhaps be inferred from reading the correspondence itself.

On February 26, 1972, in the letters in which he systematized a set of criticisms to Odylo, Montello and Meireles, Cardoso maintained that the lack of knowledge about Cochrane’s work in Maranhão was such that the activities of the Sesquicentennial in the state considered pronouncing a building on rua do Egito as heritage-listed, in the city center of São Luís, in allusion to the place where the admiral would have participated in a banquet. After claiming to have “read a lot about Cochrane”, he maintained that the admiral did not leave the ship during his stay in São Luís.<sup>66</sup>

In the same vein, he claimed to have been informed by Governor Pedro Neiva de Santana that a “Navy personality” had asked him to build a statue for Cochrane, also on the occasion of the event. Before commenting on the proposal – which he considered unfeasible – Cardoso stressed that the governor “does not sympathize with the admiral”, an aversion that he said he understood. In his opinion, the generic statement about the thefts committed by Cochrane needed further studies,<sup>67</sup> and it was not the main reason for the repulsion, which he believed having a more structural motivation:

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65 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Feb. 2, 1972.

66 In the correspondence he produced on his first visit to Maranhão, between July and September 1823, Cochrane reported being aboard the ship Pedro I, except on September 16, when he signed documents at the Santo Antônio Fortress, on the outskirts of São Luís. I found no records of Cochrane’s movement through the city’s streets or participation in such a banquet. I thank Roni César Andrade de Araújo for the information used in this note.

67 Moment in which he presented the aforementioned criticism of Mário Meireles, for treating Cochrane as “infamous”. Still in the context of the Sesquicentennial, Josué Montello published a brief and unoriginal work on the character, under the title *The bills of Cochrane in Maranhão* (1975).

The Portuguese, for many reasons, continued being the preponderant element of the province. Those who were born after Independence in Maranhão had a terrible heritage: the main hatred of their parents against a greater responsible for the misfortune that befell them in 1823 [...]. This heritage, which was passed from one to the other, among the immense Portuguese family that, even today, is the immense family of Maranhão, cannot spare Cochrane any sympathetic gesture [...].<sup>68</sup>

It is necessary remembering that this explanation by Cardoso, proffered in private, was timidly highlighted in the introduction “Notes”, but opposed in the book flap – both written by Cardoso – in which he proclaimed, as we have seen, the struggles of a province that since Beckman’s Revolt wanted to be part of Brazil... Taken together, and considered the most widely practiced licenses in private, Cardoso seems having made the book flap to have the desired effect at a time of strong national evocation; his opinion, in this case, did not seem convenient.

In the attached documents, only two records authored by Cochrane were added,<sup>69</sup> an attempt certainly more modest than that intended by Cardoso, who at the end of March 1972 expressed his expectation (later frustrated, as we have seen) that the research on Cochrane would be complemented in Maranhão. At the time, aware of the clashes in relation to the character, he made two revealing observations about the climate around his memory: that he would stick to what “official acts contain” and that he had found a “terrifying document about Cochrane”, to which he added: “If his adversaries see it today, then Cochrane will be lost in Maranhão...”.<sup>70</sup>

Without the intended emphasis on Cochrane, the book seems to have been ready throughout the month of June.<sup>71</sup> On July 4, Cardoso reminded Buzar that he was still waiting to hear his opinion on the book, a demand repeated in subsequent correspondence.<sup>72</sup>

In any case, the mission had been accomplished. The book arrived in São Luís before the emperor’s remains.

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68 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Feb. 26, 1972. The letter’s sequence reiterates the absence of studies on Cochrane and expresses Cardoso’s sympathy for the character.

69 Indicated with the numbers 58 and 62.

70 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Mar. 23, 1972.

71 Correspondence made available does not include the period between May 15 and July 4, 1972.

72 ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Jul. 4, 1972. In the same letter, Cardoso reported that he had met José Sarney on the day the books were sent to São Luís, and that he would have liked the result.

## Final considerations

On the cover of Vieira da Silva's book, in an unusual way, there was the information "Rio, July 1972". The presence of the Sesquicentennial in the work, and, more specifically, its connection to "July 1972", also appears on the back of the book, as already noted. At this point, it should be added that at the beginning of the book, in a format similar to an epigraph, one can read: "Launch of this edition: July 13, 1972, the date on which the remains of Emperor d. Pedro I are received in the city of São Luís, Maranhão [...]".

However, while the main newspapers in São Luís gave wide coverage to the presence of the emperor's remains in the city, they did not record any activity regarding the publication or launch of Vieira da Silva's book. The "absence of the author" and the fact that the publication's mentor resides in Rio de Janeiro and does not belong to the city's intellectual circles, perhaps explains, in part, this silence. Added to these factors is the situation of Sudema at that time, transformed into the Secretaria de Planejamento [Planning Secretariat] – which, in practical terms, meant its extinction.<sup>73</sup>

*Pari passu*, other changes affected this scenario involving the Sesquicentennial publications. Mário Meireles assumed as Chief of Staff of Pedro Neiva de Santana government. His movements in the government involved other articulations: the *História da Independência* published in January 1972, was prefaced by Magno Bacelar, then Maranhão Secretary of Education and Culture, who registered institutional support for the book, "in this phase in which civility and education are reinvigorated, asserting themselves as priority objectives of the Brazilian nation [...]" (Bacelar, 1972), already in the spirit of the Sesquicentennial celebrations. In time: Bacelar was the president of the Comissão Executiva Estadual (CEE) in Maranhão and Meireles was one of its members (Corrêa, 1972, p. 26).<sup>74</sup>

In that context, the Culture management had undergone an important change. At the end of 1971, the newly created Fundação Cultural do Maranhão (Func) [Maranhão Cultural Foundation]<sup>75</sup> added several administrative bodies

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73 Cardoso learned of Sudema's dissolution at the end of June/beginning of July, when Vieira da Silva's book was already ready.

74 Shortly afterwards, *O Imparcial* referred to Bacelar as president of the Comissão de Programação, Incentivo e Coordenação [Commission for Programming, Incentive and Coordination] of the festivities. *O Imparcial*, n. 17,224, Feb. 10, 1972, p. 3. BPBL, São Luís, Maranhão, periodical section. Bacelar was Chief of Staff in 1971, being succeeded by Meireles. On the work of the CEE in Maranhão, it is one of the objects of the ongoing research.

75 Law n. 3.225, of December 6, 1971.

into its structure. For what interests us here, it should be noted that such changes led to the transfer of the São Luís Collection from Sudema to Func, at least in the last breath, represented by the publication of the book *Símbolos nacionais do Brasil e estaduais do Maranhão*, by Mário Meireles, the last of the series.<sup>76</sup>

Official representative of Maranhão at the Congress on the History of Independence, organized by the IHGB, Meireles had marked his presence on the Sesquicentennial agenda since January, as we have seen, with the publication of the *História da Independência do Maranhão*. In August, on the anniversary of the Academia Maranhense de Letras (AML), the scholar gave a lecture on the Independence of Maranhão. In a note published by *Jornal Pequeno*, the president of the AML invited them “to prestige the important event”.<sup>77</sup>

The following month, when the celebrations were apothecic, Meireles published the book *Símbolos nacionais*. The month/year feature was maintained on the cover, updated to: “Rio, September – 1972”; at the end of the book, Cardoso welcomed the work, “although it is not a reprint”, and concluded by warning that, from now on, “the Fundação Cultural do Maranhão will be responsible for selecting and determining the next editions of this collection”.

Regarding the second edition of Vieira da Silva’s book, it would be necessary to wait a few decades for greater repercussion.

Tradução de Ricardo Picchiarini

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<sup>76</sup> On July 4, Cardoso asked Buzar if the book *Símbolos nacionais*, to be printed in Rio de Janeiro, would be sponsored by Sudema. ABB, letter from Cardoso to Buzar, Jul. 4, 1972. At the end, *Símbolos nacionais* stamped, on the frontispiece, the name of the Secretaria de Planejamento, and informed, on the back cover, the sponsorship of Func.

<sup>77</sup> *Jornal Pequeno*, n. 6.649, Aug. 10, 1972, p. 4. BPBL, São Luís, Maranhão, periodical section.

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