

Administrative trajectories of the governors of the captaincy of Rio de Janeiro (1710-1763)

Trajelórias administrativas dos governadores da capitania do Rio de Janeiro
(1710-1763)

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Abstract: The purpose of this article is to analyze the governors of Rio de Janeiro between 1710 and 1763, seeking to understand, through their social profiles and their trajectories, the political position and the centrality of Rio de Janeiro. In this perspective, studying social qualifications and careers of titular governors of Rio de Janeiro in the decades that have elapsed, will enable us to better understand the dynamics that Portuguese Crown - through the choice of their royal representatives - sought to put into practice in this territory.

Keywords: administrative trajectories; Rio de Janeiro; XVIII century.

Resumo: O presente artigo tem como intuito analisar os governadores nomeados para administrarem o Rio de Janeiro entre 1710 e 1763, buscando perceber, através de seus perfis sociais e de suas trajetórias, o acrescentamento político do cargo em questão e a centralidade da capitania fluminense. Nessa perspectiva, estudar as qualificações sociais e as carreiras dos governadores titulares do Rio de Janeiro, nas décadas delimitadas, nos possibilitará melhor compreender a dinâmica que a Coroa portuguesa – através da escolha de seus representantes régios – procurou colocar em prática, nesse território do ultramar.

Palavras-chave: trajetórias administrativas; Rio de Janeiro; século XVIII.

The discovery of gold in the 1690s made the importance of Rio de Janeiro in the South Atlantic, rather than the Portuguese Empire as a whole, become even greater,

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modifying a captaincy limit in the imperial government scenario. It was one of the representative factors to see how the changes occurred in the commercial routes, more broadly, in the imperial dynamics, which constituted and interconnected as networks of the most diverse regions of the overseas between each other and with the center.

With precious metals, the Portuguese Empire underwent several important political and economic changes. It is possible to highlight, basically, two main conjunctures in the Portuguese economy of the XVIII century, determined by gold. The first conjuncture can be noticed until about the year 1760, being characterized by the good conditions of commerce that were reflected in the public income. This is the period we are going to work on in this article.

The second conjuncture occurred mainly after 1760, with the economic crisis due to the decline of gold, which led to the adoption of a series of measures decreed during the government of D. José I and the Marquis of Pombal, which caused the resurgence of the idea of privileged trading companies; in addition to the growing stimulus of protectionist measures in metallurgy and manufacturing.

Lusitanian finances between 1700 and 1810, according to António Manuel Hespanha, depended very much on the incomes of Portuguese America, which generally “are of decisive importance. One is the tobacco. Another, the “fifths” of gold and diamonds “ (HESPANHA, 1993, p, 236).

In addition to the Minas region, southern Lusitanian America, especially from the second half of the seventies, represented a central region for Lusitanian interests, since it connected with Spanish America and favored the connection with the African continent. In addition to the commercial question, the territorial disputes between Portuguese and Spanish, which began at the end of the 17th century with the foundation of the Colony of the Sacramento, were intensified after the Treaty of Madrid in 1750. The delimitation of the southern borders has become one of the main problems to be solved in the period.

The captaincy of Rio de Janeiro operated as a point of connection between the Mines and the South, and then began to act, increasingly, as a political and administrative center, and a commercial and economic center. As a result, the importance of his governor was greatly increased, especially since the reign of King João V. This strategic territory needed to have a royal representative who was able to meet the most important demands related to the defense of lands, demarcation of frontiers and inspection and collection of precious metals.

In this context of eighteenth-century changes, the Portuguese Empire increasingly turned to America, and, as Russell-Wood points out, the authority of the governors of

captaincies was emphasized (RUSSELL-WOOD, 1998a, 233). From then on, it is also possible to see "a significant change in the profile of the men who came to occupy the position in Brazil, systematically regrouped within the titled nobility" (GOUVÊA, 2001, p. 303), both with respect to the governors general, and to the governors of the most important captaincies.

Nuno Gonçalo Monteiro also perceives a change in the profile of the governors over time, showing that from the 17th to the 18th centuries there was an aristocratization of the recruits, both in the main and subordinate captaincies. The historian also observes that, from 1720, the appointments of the governors passed less and less by the Overseas Council. In this sense, the more relevant the captaincy to the Crown, the earlier the selection contests ceased to happen, thus increasing the direct indication of the king (MONTEIRO, 2005, pp. 100-104).

In addition to the nobility, Dauril Alden points out some other qualities that were significant for the individual to be appointed to the position of governor: to be responsible, prudent and experienced in wars (Alden, 1968, pp. 3-4). It was ideal even if it was not very young, since, increasingly, the extensive experimentation in different positions and / or regions of the Empire became fundamental to lead a captaincy.

Russell-Wood states that consideration was given to the importance of family ties, the personality of the candidate, and the esteem enjoyed by him and his family at the Court (RUSSELL-WOOD, 1998b, p. 187). Another relevant attribute, highlighted by Maria de Fátima Gouvêa, was the movement of these people through different parts of the Empire, which made the servants more experienced and better able to face the problems that would arise (GOUVÊA, 2001, pp. 308-309). Despite the indicated profile, we know that there were no universal criteria for choosing this royal representative, and that it varied according to the prestige of the captaincy, which reflected in hierarchies in the profiles of the men chosen to govern the different captaincies of the Portuguese Empire, as in shows Mafalda Soares da Cunha (2005).

In this context, we should also point out the changes in the modern state in the early eighteenth century, when the king began to gather an ever broader set of powers, in addition to establishing a very diversified bureaucracy and a growing complexity of the political apparatus. In this sense, the choice of the governors of the main captaincies of the Empire would be an example of these transformations, since "it followed a pattern determined by political needs. The rulers and viceroys came mostly from the same group, and had similar characteristics, because they were believed to be the ones best suited to the interests of the Crown "(PEREIRA, 2009, p. 205).

From these propositions, it becomes fundamental, then, to know better the trajectories and profiles of the titular governors of one of the principal captaincies of Latin America - that of Rio de Janeiro - in a context of political and economic changes in the Portuguese Empire, seeking how these individuals reflected these transformations. The intention is to present, even superficially, the profile of the men being chosen, to note if this profile became more specialized, and if there are any distinctions or similarities among these royal representatives over the decades to be analyzed.

The analysis of social profiles and administrative trajectories of royal and/or local representatives in the Portuguese Empire of the modern period has been greatly explored by historiography lately, which demonstrates the relevance of the theme. Among the authors who wrote fundamental works on the subject, it is possible to emphasize Francisco Carlos Cardoso Cosentino, that has diverse studies, especially on general governors.

In this sense, it is worth mentioning his book *General governors of the State of Brazil (16th-17th centuries): crafts, regiments, governance and trajectories*, in which Francisco Cosentino devotes two chapters of the second part of the work to discuss the careers and trajectories of Thomas de Sousa, Francisco Giraldes, Gaspar de Sousa, Diogo de Mendonça Furtado and Roque da Costa Barreto (COSENTINO, 2009, pp. 135-199).

A year before the publication of the book, Francisco Cosentino had already published an important article in the Annals of the II International Meeting of Colonial History, held in the city of Natal, dealing with the social profile of general governors between 1640 and 1705, as the title of communication , and highlighting the central characteristics of these royal administrators, their services rendered and their ennoblement trajectories (COSENTINO, 2008).

The premature and unexpected death of Francisco Cosentino interrupted the continuation of his studies and his brilliant career, but this year we had the publication of an article, which he had already written, together with Mafalda Soares da Cunha, António Castro Nunes and Ronald Raminelli, called *Governors of the Reign and Overseas*, in which we can once again see the argumentative and documentary richness of his work, with emphasis in this case on the correspondence of governors and the importance of political communication in the modern Portuguese Empire (COSENTINO CUNHA, NUNES, RAMINELLI, 2017, pp. 299-334).

We could cite several other texts, communications and articles by Francisco Cosentino that address the theme of the trajectories and profiles of rulers in Portuguese America, but what interests us most here is to realize the relevance of his research in the

area, and seek to collaborate for the continuation of historiographical studies on this subject.

On administrative trajectories in the state capitania of Rio de Janeiro, in the first half of the Seventy, there is the study of Victor Hugo Abril, which analyzes the interim governors, but these individuals will not be analyzed in this article. This work focuses precisely on the moments when the titular governors - who are the ones we intend to study - were absent (ABRIL, 2015).

There is also a thesis dealing with one of the governors of Rio de Janeiro, from the 17th to the 18th century - Artur de Sá and Meneses - but the perspective of the author Denise Vieira Demetrio's analysis is different from ours: her intention is to analyze the relationship of this governor with Martim Correia Vasques, who was acting governor of Rio de Janeiro (DEMETRIO, 2014).

Besides these, we have, on profiles and trajectories, for other localities, temporalities and positions, essential works such as those of Fabiano Vilaça dos Santos, which deals with the State of Grão-Pará and Maranhão between 1751 and 1780 (SANTOS, 2011), and studies in development such as those of Leonardo Paiva de Oliveira, a master's degree from the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte, which is analyzing captains mores of Rio Grande and Ceará between 1656-1755 (OLIVEIRA, 2016), among others.

Notwithstanding the increase in the study of administrative trajectories in the Portuguese Empire, we note that historiography still lacks work on various positions, in many temporal and spatial cuts, as is the case of the governors of the captaincy of Rio de Janeiro, between 1710 and 1763. In this sense, the article proposes to bring an original contribution to these studies. However, it is worth noting that in this text we intend to raise only a few aspects of the trajectories of the governors of the period, and of the subjects that marked their management, since each of these characters deserves a specific study of their profile, their family and social relations, and of his government, analyzes that do not fit within the limits of an article.

The first governor to be investigated is Francisco de Castro Morais, who had previously served as interim governor of the captaincy. He was brother of Gregório de Castro Morais, who also ruled Rio de Janeiro, interim, from 1704 to 1705, and from 1709 to 1710. Francisco Morais was initially interested in taking care of the defense of the city, which was justified by the "facts that were given of successive piracies by French ships and the dubious and indecisive diplomatic policy of Portugal with France" (FREIRE, 1912, p.).

Despite his concern for a defense, it was precisely the French invasion of Duclerc and Duguay-Trouin in Rio de Janeiro, in 1710 and 1711, respectively, seeking to seize the most important captaincy in Portuguese America at the time. After the victory of the second invasion and domination of the city by Duguay-Trouin troops, it was necessary to pay a French bailout to regain Portuguese rule over Rio de Janeiro and to have a captaincy. Francisco Morais was found guilty for not having properly defended a city, and was even accused of handing over the land to the invader.

Unlike his brother, Gregorio, who was much praised in his brief passages through Rio de Janeiro, Francisco Morais was defeated, and Antonio de Albuquerque Coelho de Carvalho, who in fact was already in Portuguese America, took over the captaincy. The charter of Antonio de Albuquerque to administer the river dates from March of 1709; but immediately upon arriving in America, he went to Minas, and left Gregory de Castro Morais as his interim. With the separation of the captaincy of Rio from the captaincy of São Paulo and Minas do Ouro, he became the first governor of this new captaincy, receiving orders from the Crown to reside in São Paulo or Minas (MARTINS, 1988).

When he learned of the second French invasion of Rio, he came down from Minas to the Rio de Janeiro captaincy, but arrived after the agreement made by Francisco de Castro Morais with the privateers. One of the major problems facing Antonio was "to convince the residents, including the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, of the need to repay the royal coffers of the money they had borrowed" for the ransom payment to the French "(FREIRE, 1912, p. 282). Antonio de Albuquerque Coelho de Carvalho, who remained in management until 1713, spent most of his time trying to recover the city after the French attacks.

Antonio de Albuquerque Coelho de Carvalho was the son of a homonymous gentleman, and of Inês Maria Coelho. In the Kingdom, was the commander of Santa Maria de Cea and Vila Cova Order of Christ, and the landlord of Couto de Outil, Warden of Sines, commendation of Santo Ildefonso do Val de Telhas, in the Order of Avis, besides having received several favors and the donations of the captaincies of Santo André de Alcântara and Santa Cruz de Camutá (MARTINS, 1988). After participating in the administration of Portuguese America, he was captain-general in Angola between 1721 and 1725, when he died.

In the year 1713, D. Francisco Xavier de Távora, the son of the 2nd Marquess of Távora, began to be in charge of repairing the fortifications, such as the island of Snakes, and building forts in the captaincy, as the fort of Laje, for example. In addition, he took care of the trial and punishment of those responsible for the French invasions. During his

administration, he had conflicts with the Chamber and with the outside judge regarding the issue of land donations. In this process,

In addition to the former governor, several officers were sentenced to deportation to Angola. Then came Rio de Janeiro through a period of social crisis of violence and murder, especially the rivalries between the three families - the Gurgéis, the Elders and the Barbalhos - disturbing public order (CARVALHO, 1990: 45).

Xavier de Távora died in September 1716, and after a few months of interim government, Antonio de Brito Freire de Meneses, who also died prematurely in 1719, remained in his place. During its brief administration, the Colony of the Sacramento was recovered, as a result of peace treaties. For this reason, he dealt especially with the fortresses in the south of Portuguese America, but also occupied himself with the fortifications of Rio. The colonization of Santa Catarina was also begun in this period.

We did not find much information about Antonio de Brito Freire de Meneses, but we know that he was the son of Francisco de Brito Freire, who was commander of the Order of Christ, and vice-admiral in the province of Alentejo, during the war with the Spaniards, having been an admiral of the Royal Portuguese Armada in 1654, when it attacked Pernambuco, occupied by the Dutch, obtaining the victory for the Lusitanian Crown (ARAÚJO, 1820, pp. 136-137). The father of Antonio was still governor of Pernambuco, between 1661 and 1664, and governor of the city of Beja, in 1665.

With the death of the governor Antonio de Brito, we have another period of interim management, which is replaced by the government of Aires de Saldanha de Albuquerque, still in the year 1719, who was the son of a João de Saldanha de Albuquerque Matos Coutinho and Noronha, nobleman.

In addition to being governor of Rio de Janeiro, Aires de Saldanha, also a young nobleman, like his father, was gentleman of the Chamber of the Infanterman D. António, Sergeant major of battle in Belém Tower, and commander of Santa Maria de Castro Laboreiro, in the Order of Christ (PEREIRA; RODRIGUES, 1907, p. 112). He married D. Maria Leonor de Moscoso, queen of Queen D. Mariana d'Austria and daughter of D. João Mascarenhas. Among his children stands out Manuel de Saldanha de Albuquerque e Castro, 1st Conde da Ega, captain-general of Madeira, and viceroy and governor of India, between 1758 and 1765.

In the administration of Aires de Saldanha, a period of public works was inaugurated, greatly expanded, later, under the government of Gomes Freire de Andrada. As examples, we have the pavement of several streets and the advance of the works of Carioca. In addition, we can highlight the crackdown against piracy, with the creation of the "Coast Guard Ship" tax, charged by imported blacks and by ships entering the port. He also worried about the inspection of the way to the Mines, establishing the registry in the passage of the new way (CARVALHO, 1990, p. 45).

The need for separation of the captaincies of Minas and São Paulo was perceived at that moment. The change was accepted by the Overseas Council and approved by D. João V, who appointed different governors for São Paulo and Minas Gerais. For the first one, Rodrigo César de Meneses was chosen, and for the last D. Lourenço de Almeida, and both assumed the respective governments the following year.

Another central problem in the government of Aires de Saldanha was the question of the South, since the Spaniards did not give up trying to exercise jurisdiction in the Colonia del Sacramento, which made it difficult for Saldanha's administration to secure possession of the territories (FREIRE, 1912, pp. 481-486).

Aires de Saldanha de Albuquerque ruled until 1725, when it gave rise to Luiz Vahia Monteiro, knight of the Order of Christ and infantry colonel of the square of Chaves, who took over the administration in March of the same year, and had several conflicts during his government. Vahia Monteiro, or the "Ounce", as it became known - for being considered evil and perverse - clashed head-on with some important interests of local representatives (CAVALCANTE, 2006, 172).

The maintenance of guards on the coast and the opening of a new road between São Paulo and Minas were some of the measures implemented by Vahia Monteiro to prevent smuggling, but this one remained very strong. The governor even informed the king that the ministers did not do their duty, creating many difficulties in instituting a debauchery against the criminals.

Vahia Monteiro systematically accused the authorities involved in the inspection of precious metals, especially from 1729, when diamond deposits were found in Serro Frio. Inspection began to be more rigorous in this region, with the collection of the capitulation, and the governor affirmed that those in charge of the control were committed in the illegal

movements. Among them, Luiz Vahia Monteiro focused on record providers, saying that they were accomplices in the theft of gold¹.

From these denunciations, Vahia Monteiro unleashed the fury of many powerful local groups, as she also disagreed with Benedictines, chambermaids and magistrates, among others. Even with businessmen, the governor became indisposed by apprehending the correspondence of these individuals and having several merchants arrested, always seeking, in every way, to avoid the mischief of precious metals.

Obviously, these businessmen turned to the Overseas Council and to the Treasury Attorney, who issued opinions in 1731, stating that Vahia Monteiro was violating private letters, causing damage to commerce. In addition, the governor was accused of abuse of power.

Vahia Monteiro became increasingly isolated, losing allies and disputes against the local groups with which he entered into friction, which were part of important networks of power, which often reached the Court. As a result of these many misunderstandings, Luiz Vahia Monteiro was eventually deposed by the Chamber in 1732 and, after a short period of interim, with Manuel de Freitas da Fonseca, he assumes Gomes Freire de Andrada.

Gomes Freire, the last governor to be quoted in this article, is a case in point. First, because he had administered the captaincy of Rio de Janeiro for almost thirty years (from April 1733 to January 1, 1763, the day he died), a very long time to hold this position, since the appointment, by the charter of governors, was generally for a period of four years.

Secondly, by the extensive territorial area that the government covered, from 1748, when Gome Freire became responsible for the entire central-south region of Portuguese America². From the outset of his administration, the royal representative, who had been active and constantly present in Minas and São Paulo, began to act actively in the second half of the eighteenth century in the disputes between the Portuguese and Spanish Crowns in the south of the American territory, especially since the signing of the Treaty of Madrid.

In this process, we are interested in understanding why Gomes Freire de Andrada was chosen to hold the position of governor of the state of Rio de Janeiro. As we saw above, all the appointed governors, from the clipping we chose to study, were primarily concerned with two central issues: precious metals, and everything that involved them - inspection, contraband, roads, collection - and defense of the city and the central and southern region

¹ Letter from Luiz Vahia Monteiro to Secretary of State Diogo de Mendonça Corte Real, about the misplacements of the gold and its collection and need of time to put in the coffers. Rio de Janeiro, August 26, 1729. National Archive of Rio de Janeiro, codex 80 - Active and passive correspondence of the governors of Rio de Janeiro with the Court (1718-1763), vol. 2, fl. 230v-231.

² Provision of September 10, 1748. National Archive of Rio de Janeiro, codex 952, vol. 34, f. 246.

of Portuguese America. As we have already analyzed, not all the chosen royal representatives succeeded in carrying out these tasks successfully.

In this sense, and taking into account the concern of the Portuguese Crown with a greater administrative rationality, from the reign of King John V, and especially from the 1720s and 1730s, the choice of administrators for key regions overseas American, like Rio de Janeiro, should be well thought out and strategic, to preserve the territory and guarantee the collection of gold.

Gomes Freire de Andrada then fit into this desired profile. Belonging to an important family, with a tradition of service to the Portuguese Crown since the 14th century. Their ancestors fought in Alcácer-Quibir, others were present in the Restoration War, such as Bernardino Freire de Andrada, father of Gomes Freire, and Gomes Freire de Andrada, uncle and homonym of the governor.

Both had an outstanding administrative trajectory, after participating in the war: the uncle was governor of the State of Maranhão, between 1684 and 1688, collaborating for the end of the Beckman Revolt; and his father was governor of São Tomé and Peniche, then governor of Portalegre, in 1704 (GAY, 1992), governor of arms in the Alentejo, in 1707, and held the position of general field teacher in the final years of his life, as well as having a seat in the Royal Council (SOUSA, 1749, p. 528).

In relation to Gomes Freire, he also held other positions before going to the Rio de Janeiro captaincy, and went on to attend the third year of law in Coimbra, "when, breaking the war, he began to serve in the army, in the cavalry, and became a prisoner" (Varnenhagen 1962: 182). The referred war is the War of Spanish Succession, in which Gomes Freire commanded one of the regiments. Served for 23 years in the regiment of Alentejo (1710-1733), arriving to the position of captain of cavalry. He was also sergeant-in-chief of the cavalry regiment of Alcântara, Lisbon district.

In his administration in Rio de Janeiro, he performed religious, intellectual, political, administrative and military services. Among many other achievements, he completed the public works of water supply for the Carioca aqueduct (1744 to 1750), promoted the construction of the Government Palace, the public fountain of Carmo Square, and the development of various religious congregations, such as the convent of Nossa Senhora do Desterro, in Santa Tereza and, in 1739, the seminaries of St. Joseph and St. Peter. In 1751, the Court of Appeal of Rio de Janeiro was established, with the same rank as that of Bahia, and Gomes Freire was the first president and regedor (CARVALHO, 1990, pp. 48-50).

However, Gomes Freire's governmental performance in Portuguese America can not be summarized in Rio, since he administered the captaincy of Minas Gerais (1735-1752) and São Paulo (1737-1739) in parallel, and from 1748 onwards the captaincies of Goiás, Mato Grosso, Santa Catarina, Rio Grande do Sul and Colonia do Sacramento, now part of Uruguay, thus adding the greatest amount of powers that a captaincy governor had.

From this brief analysis of the trajectory of seven governors of Rio de Janeiro, between the years 1710 and 1763, we can corroborate the historiography on the subject, as we saw at the beginning of the article, which highlights that the Portuguese Crown sought, as administrators, preferably aristocrats, and those who had some prior experience in providing services. In the state of Rio de Janeiro, such characteristics were even more important, since this territory, in the eighteenth century, was fundamental for the maintenance of the Empire, since it served as the main link between the Mines and the southern region, in dispute with the Spaniards.

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