



“BRAZIL IN THE ORIGINAL” (1937): ESSAY ON THE DENIALISM OF BANDEIRANTE VIOLENCE IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES

“O BRASIL NO ORIGINAL” (1937): ENSAIO SOBRE O NEGACIONISMO DA VIOLÊNCIA BANDEIRANTE DO SÉCULO XVII E XVIII

“BRASIL EN EL ORIGINAL” (1937): ENSAYO SOBRE EL NEGACIONISMO DE LA VIOLENCIA BANDEIRANTE EN LOS SIGLOS XVII Y XVIII



George Leonardo Seabra COELHO¹
e-mail: george.coelho@hotmail.com

How to reference this article:

COELHO, G. L. S. “Brazil in the original” (1937): Essay on the denialism of bandeirante violence in the 17th and 18th centuries. **Estudos de Sociologia**, Araraquara, v. 28, n. 00, e023023, 2023. e-ISSN: 1982-4718. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52780/res.v28i00.17386>



| Submitted: 01/11/2022
| Required revisions: 08/09/2023
| Approved: 21/10/2023
| Published: 30/12/2023

Editor: Profa. Dra. Maria Chaves Jardim
Deputy Executive Editor: Prof. Dr. José Anderson Santos Cruz

¹ Federal University of Tocantins (UFT), Porto Nacional – Tocantins (TO) – Brazil. PhD in History. Coordinator of the Postgraduate Program in the History of Amazonian Populations (PPGHispam) and the Media, Technology and History Research Group (MITECHIS).

ABSTRACT: In order to contribute with the approach on the period from 1930 to 1945, we intend to recover the conflicts within the Brazilian elites. In order to break with this forgetfulness, this article reads the ideology of the Bandeira Movement as an example of the political proposals that were launched in the dispute for power in the second half of the 1930s. We will discuss the role of Cassiano Ricardo as a leader of the "new bandeirantes" and how this intellectual re-signified the "bandeirante symbol" and the Modernist literary statements to supply the needs of his political field in the 1930s. We found that in trying to give meaning to the historical fact of the Bandeiras of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, this intellectual did something close to what authors such as Pierre Vidal-Naquet (1988), Enzo Travesso (2004), Luís Edmundo de Souza Moraes (2011), Denise Rollemberg and Janaina Martins Cordeiro (2021) call "negationism". To develop our argument, we will read the manifesto of the Bandeira Movement and the essay *Brazil in the Original* (1937) to demonstrate how this appropriation minimized the violent actions of the bandeirantes in favor of a supposed construction of the Brazilian Nation.

KEYWORDS: Representation. History. Bandeirismo.

RESUMO: *Ao contribuir com estudos sobre o período que vai de 1930 até 1945, este artigo apresenta o ideário do Movimento Bandeira, o qual é posto como uma das propostas políticas que se lançaram na disputa pelo poder. Discutimos a atuação de Cassiano Ricardo como líder dos "novos bandeirantes" e, de que forma, esse intelectual ressignificou o "símbolo bandeirante" e os enunciados literários Modernistas para suprir as necessidades do seu campo político na década de 1930. Constatamos que ao se apropriar politicamente das Bandeiras do século XVII e XVIII, esse intelectual realizou algo próximo ao que autores como Pierre Vidal-Naquet (1988), Enzo Travesso (2004), Luís Edmundo de Souza Moraes (2011), Denise Rollemberg e Janaina Martins Cordeiro (2021) chamam de revisionismo-negacionista. Para desenvolvermos nosso argumento faremos a leitura do manifesto do Movimento bandeira e do ensaio *O Brasil no Original* (1937) para demonstrarmos como essa apropriação minimizou a ação violentas dos bandeirantes em prol de uma suposta construção da Nação brasileira.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Representação. História. Bandeirismo.*

RESUMEN: *Al contribuir a los estudios sobre el período de 1930 a 1945, este artículo presenta la ideología del Movimiento Bandeira, que se presentó como una de las propuestas políticas en la disputa por el poder. Discutimos el papel de Cassiano Ricardo como líder de los "nuevos bandeirantes" y cómo este intelectual resignificó el "símbolo bandeirante" y los enunciados literarios modernistas para satisfacer las necesidades de su campo político en la década de 1930. Encontramos que al apropiarse politicamente de las banderas de los siglos XVII y XVIII, este intelectual hizo algo cercano a lo que autores como Pierre Vidal-Naquet (1988), Enzo Travesso (2004), Luís Edmundo de Souza Moraes (2011), Denise Rollemberg y Janaina Martins Cordeiro (2021) llaman revisionista-negacionista. Para desarrollar nuestro argumento, leeremos el manifiesto del Movimiento de la Bandera y el ensayo *Brasil en el Original* (1937) para demostrar cómo esta apropiación minimizó las acciones violentas de los bandeirantes en favor de la supuesta construcción de la nación brasileña.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Representación. La historia. Bandeirismo.*

Introduction

When examining the political confrontations of the mid-1930s, Ângela de Castro Gomes (1980) offered us an interpretative path. The historian alerted us to the fact that the period from 1930 to 1945 was treated by historiography as a cohesive block. The "Revolution of 1930" marked the starting point, definitively breaking with the Old Republic (1889-1930) and inaugurating a revolutionary political project. The 1937 coup was seen as the evolutionary restart of the projects of the "Revolution of 1930" and thus the crowning of the revolutionary projects of the 1930 alliance forces. By establishing the Estado Novo (1937-1945) as the logical conclusion of 1930, the seven years preceding it became an antechamber to its inevitable presence. Finally, the cycle would come to an end in 1945, when another point of division would begin.

The need for another historical interpretation became necessary, both in terms of relations between the dominant and the dominated, and in terms of relations between the political factions of the elites (GOMES, 1980). The traditional approaches present in the 1980s, and still found in the second decade of the 21st century, ignore the marches and counter-marches of the period from 1930 to 1937². In order to provide new approaches, this article reads the ideology of the Bandeira Movement³ as an example of the political proposals that were launched in the dispute for power in the second half of the 1930s. In doing so, we address the strategies that underpinned the ideology of the group, which positioned itself as a fourth political path in the years leading up to the coup that led to the installation of the Estado Novo (COELHO, 2015). We also discuss Cassiano Ricardo's role as leader of the "new *bandeirantes*"⁴ and how this intellectual re-signified the "*bandeirante* symbol" and the statements of São Paulo modernism in the 1920s to meet the needs of his political camp in the 1930s. We found that in re-signifying the 17th and 18th century *Bandeiras*, this intellectual did something close to what authors such as Pierre Vidal-Naquet (1988), Enzo Travesso (2004), Luís Edmundo de Souza Moraes (2011), Denise Rollemberg and Janaina Martins Cordeiro (2021) call revisionist-negationism.

² Traditional approaches silence crucial facts in Brazilian political history, such as the Constitutionalist Revolution of 1932; the Constituent Assembly of 1934; the Communist Intent of 1935; the political actions of the National Liberation Alliance (ANL) and the Brazilian Integralist Action (AIB); and the electoral campaign of the second half of 1937.

³ The Bandeira Movement was a political cultural movement organized by Cassiano Ricardo, Menotti del Picchia and Cândido Motta Filho between 1935 and 1937.

⁴ The term "new *bandeirantes*" will be used to refer to the intellectuals who belonged to the Bandeira Movement. When the term "bandeirista" appears, it has the same value as "new *bandeirantes*", i.e. it will refer to the personalities who took part in that group.

In order to understand how Cassiano Ricardo acted within the limits of revisionist-negationism in his essay *Brazil in the Original (O Brasil no Original, 1937)*, we will be dialoguing with the contributions of Roger Chartier (2002). The French historian's positions have helped us to understand the conditions of textual production, the different relationships between the work and its creator, between the work and its time, and between different works from the same period. This study starts from the cultural or intellectual consumption of a work as another production, which is a space open to multiple literatures⁵ (CHARTIER, 2002). Based on this premise, we understand cultural consumption as the production of representations that are not identical to those that the producer, author or artist invested in the work (CHARTIER, 1990). From the point of view of cultural consumption, the essay *Brazil in the Original (O Brasil no Original, 1937)* has acquired an expanded meaning through the strategies of interpretation that construct its meanings; often absolutely new, compared to the author's expectations.

Based on Chartier's (2002) considerations, we can affirm that Cassiano Ricardo - in establishing the *bandeirista* ideology in his essay *Brazil in the Original (O Brasil no original, 1937)* - appropriated history, modernist literature and the political context in which he was inserted in order to sustain the symbolic foundations of the *Bandeira* Movement. In building the ideological foundations of this group, this intellectual carried out a revisionist-negationist reading of the historical *bandeiras* of the 17th and 18th centuries in order to meet the political demands of the intellectuals gathered around the *Bandeira* Movement, demands that had a very clear objective: the conquest of political power.

Although the first revisionist works date back to the 19th century, particularly in relation to the Alfred Dreyfus case. In the second half of the 20th century, revisionist interpretations emerged with the aim of relativizing the horrors of Nazism, denying the existence of gas chambers and/or minimizing the horrors of the Second World War (1939-1945) (VIAL-NAQUET, 1988). Generally, these revisionist studies are readily understood as negationist formulations about the past (ABAL, 2019; ROLLEMBERG; CORDEIRO, 2021; TRAVESSO, 2004; VIAL-NAQUET, 1988). "Negationism", according to Rollemberg and Cordeiro (2001, p. 60, our translation), can be understood as a way of "taking up the past exclusively for the political and ideological battles of the present, sometimes denying crimes or certain historical

⁵ The meaning of texts depends on the skills, codes and reading conventions of different communities and different audiences, and also on the "variations between meaning, interpretation and plural appropriations that always invent, displace, subvert" (CHARTIER, 2002, p. 259, our translation).

events; sometimes minimizing or relativizing their importance or the responsibilities of the state and society".

Starting from the premise that "negationism" reflected a practical-political-intellectual field internationally articulated with European far-right movements in the post-1945 period, we will open the possibility of thinking about these strategies in Brazil in the 1930s. We will then see how the interpretations elaborated by Cassiano Ricardo denied the violence promoted by the 17th and 18th century *Bandeiras* and also the association of the São Paulo modernist literary currents with this historical fact. Faced with this problem, we invite the reader to find out how this São Paulo intellectual re-signified the historical fact in order to meet the political demands of the 1930s.

Intellectuals, politics and re-signifying the past: appropriating the "*bandeirante* spirit"

The intellectual mentality of the 1930s was marked by the modernization of society and the exaltation of the national element. This situation influenced the development of projects related to the Brazilian economy, political organization and cultural production. In the eyes of the context - in which various national projects were launched into the political arena - the Bandeira Movement was yet another of these projects. Cassiano Ricardo's essay Brazil in the Original (*O Brasil no original*, 1937) is an important historical document that expresses the worldview of this group. This essay was published by the Bandeira Cultural Department, which, according to the *bandeiristas*, aimed to stimulate works that interpreted "Brazilian life in its originality" and defended "a social function for art and literature" (NOVOS..., 1937, p. 5, our translation).

To confirm the political weight and impact that this work would have on Brazilian intellectuals, Cassiano Ricardo made a point of transcribing Levi Carneiro's opinion⁶ - also found in the newspaper *Anhanguera*⁷ - on the "cultural and nationalist movement of Bandeira". This important member of the ABL emphasized that this movement was not about

a political party, that is, an enterprise for the conquest of power [...] Possibly, this movement would not be fully successful without the possession of the government. But there is nothing to prevent the rulers themselves, at any given moment, from taking possession of it and enshrining it (RICARDO, 1937, book cover, our translation).

⁶ Jurist, essayist and member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters (ABL).

⁷ The official body that disseminated the ideals of the Bandeira Movement was called Anhanguera, a periodical that began its activities in June 1937 and only ceased to circulate when the movement was extinguished shortly before the coup that established the Estado Novo regime.

With these words, Levi Carneiro sought to give support to the political project of the "new *bandeirantes*", since this ideology was at the "service of the Fatherland" and available for rulers to seize. As you can see, this sympathizer of the *bandeirista* ideology made it clear that the program of the "new *bandeirantes*" was just another ideology on the national political scene, since it could serve the rulers⁸ who were willing to put it into practice.

After Levi Carneiro's comments, we see the main *bandeirista* slogan printed: "For a Brazil that is ours and original. For a nationalist social democracy". This slogan was accompanied by an excerpt from the *bandeirista* manifesto⁹:

The Bandeira assigns a social function to Brazilian intelligence, which ceases to be an uncoordinated world of solitary speculative activity without efficiency, in order to collaborate freely with the State in the formation of a collective conscience, rich in observation, modern and vigilant, as suitable for the solution of Brazilian problems as it is necessary for the realization of our role in the world (RICARDO, 1937, book's cover, our translation).

The intellectuals gathered around the movement defended the thesis that Brazil had to find its way as the *bandeirantes* had done. According to the manifesto, the *bandeiristas* would bring together, "in harmonious cooperation, all creative intelligences against all conceptions alien to the climate of our spirit and contrary to national purposes" (BANDEIRA..., 1936, p. 1, our translation). Such "harmonious cooperation", according to the manifesto, would sustain "a movement of legitimate defense aimed at safeguarding the original expression of the Brazilian soul and fixing our spiritual unity, without which there will be no political unity" (BANDEIRA..., 1936, p. 1, our translation). The Manifesto also claimed that it was essential to reorganize "national thought" through the "*bandeirante* tradition" and to reinforce the meaning of this thought, placing it in a "social and political role" (BANDEIRA..., 1936, p. 1, our translation). To this end, the intelligentsia should organize itself "in the service of a great cause, which is the preservation of Brazilian originality against foreign influences that intend to distort it" (BANDEIRA..., 1936, p. 1, our translation).

⁸ At first hand, this ideology was put at the service of Armando de Salles Oliveira's election campaign during the frustrated election campaign in the second half of 1937. However, with the enactment of the Estado Novo, this ideology went on to serve another ruler, Getúlio Vargas and the Estado Novo (COELHO, 2015).

⁹ The manifesto of the Bandeira Movement was signed - in 1935 - by Cassiano Ricardo, Menotti Del Picchia, Mario de Andrade, Alcântara Machado, Guilherme de Almeida, Paulo Setúbal, Monteiro Lobato, Almeida Prado, Fonseca Teles, Reynaldo Porchat, Guilherme de Almeida, Plínio Barreto, Rubens do Amaral, Valdomiro Silveira, Vicente Ráo, Paulo Prado and Afonso Taunay. Their names are promptly put after Levi Carneiro's comment on the book's cover. This manifesto was also published in the magazine *S. Paulo* in 1936.

According to the *bandeiristas*, cooperation, unity and nationalism would form the basis of the doctrine that would organize the Brazilian nation against foreigners, elements that would be present in the *Bandeiras* of the 17th and 18th centuries. As the focus of this "spiritual unity", the "new *bandeirantes*" reinforced São Paulo's predestination to once again guide the nation's paths. In view of this, the Bandeira Movement - just as the historical *Bandeiras* did - was the fruit of the "upsurge of São Paulo's mentality towards fixing and defending the frontiers of the Fatherland" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 1, our translation).

Cassiano Ricardo positioned himself as the heir to a certain historiographical tradition in São Paulo. This tradition grew stronger in the early decades of the 20th century and was responsible for reclaiming the *bandeirante* as a symbol of São Paulo. Cassiano Ricardo thus appropriated the *bandeirante* as one of the central characters in his writings.

As far as the *bandeirante* is concerned, he had already been an important theme in historiographical, literary and pictorial works since the last decades of the 19th century. The historiography on the *Bandeiras* can be divided into two periods: the first in the 18th and 19th centuries; the second in the first three decades of the 20th century. The first was concerned with transcribing sources. From this perspective, what was called a *bandeirante* was the Paulista who entered the backlands, the conqueror and discoverer of gold mines, the head of the troops, the hunter of natives, the one who fought the rebellious slaves, in other words, the violent type. In the second, between 1890 and 1930, the *bandeirante* was revived as a symbol of São Paulo, filled with the individual qualities of courage and determination, the hero himself. At the same time, national characteristics were attributed to them, because it was they - the *bandeirantes* - who carried out the integration and expansion of the national territory (ABUD, 1985; OLIVEIRA, 2004).

Based on these considerations about the intellectual field in which the debate about the *bandeirante* was developing, we will now look at the revisionist-negationism structured by Cassiano Ricardo. For this intellectual, the symbol of São Paulo would be the main historical example to be followed by the nation in the 1930s, so the "*bandeirante* spirit" would be the only one capable of leading the Brazilian nation to a promising future. To construct this figure, the *bandeirista* leader denied all forms of barbarism in his appropriation of the past. But before we go into that, let's look at a few other indications that show that Cassiano Ricardo sought to redefine the past to suit the present in this essay.

To make the manipulation of historical memory possible, the essayist divided his text as follows: an introduction entitled "*Advertência*" (Warning) and three more chapters: "*A*

Bandeira caminhando no espaço (The Bandeira walking in space), *A Bandeira caminhando no tempo* (The Bandeira walking in time) and *Na encruzilhada da hora atual* (At the crossroads of the present hour). With this structure, Cassiano Ricardo reinforced the links between his literary work, his essay and the political convictions defended by the *bandeiristas*. For the essayist, these links were essential to justify that Brazil did not need foreign inspiration in the arts and, above all, in politics, since the historical *bandeiras* had already provided such an example.

In the essay, the *bandeirista* leader postulated that this exercise of revisiting the past would be fundamental "to draw from historical fact a conclusion that seems very interesting in view of the present time" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 5, our translation). By listing only the people from São Paulo who arrived in "Brazilian Brazil", the author strengthened regionalism in his writings. This strategy was intended not only to strengthen the representation of São Paulo's symbolic supremacy over the rest of the nation, but also to re-signify the historical role of the *bandeirantes* in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Aware of the political objectives of the essay *Brazil in the Original (O Brasil no original, 1937)*, it is impossible to ignore Cassiano Ricardo's attempt to re-elaborate a social and political interpretation of the historical past, in other words, a kind of revisionist-negationism. In his writing, all the atrocities committed during the *Bandeiras* were silenced or covered up by the mantle of the heroic mission that these people had supposedly carried out. This social and political interpretation did not refer to the historical fact itself, but to yet another artifice developed by the author to re-signify São Paulo's historical past. For this reason, the political appropriation of the past and the elaboration of another historical memory were fundamental to the essay and, consequently, to the defense of the *bandeirista* ideology.

Another extremely important component for understanding the structure of the essay *Brazil in the original (O Brasil no original, 1937)* were the historical representations typical of São Paulo (*paulistanidade*¹⁰), which underpinned the essayist's supposedly historical gaze. Considering the authoritarian approach, the main objective of the essay was to rework the Brazilian past to satisfy the interests of the intellectuals gathered in the Bandeira Movement, as

¹⁰ According to Jessica Mautinho (1991), *paulistanidade* is an ideology of the ethnic, economic and political superiority of people from the state of São Paulo over the rest of Brazilians. This understanding, according to the author, emerged at all times of crisis and reformulation between local and central power relations, such as the reaction of the Paulista Republican Party against the Revolution of 1930, the Constitutionalist Revolution in 1932 and the Presidential campaign of 1937.

well as to propose a new organization of the Brazilian state to combat Communism, Integralism and Liberal Democracy.

After defining the historical origins of the *Bandeira* Movement, the *bandeirista* leader explained the group's literary origins. In the essay, Cassiano Ricardo devotes an entire section to the Week of 22. The aim was to demonstrate the political ferment behind the literary movement. For the leader of the "new *bandeirantes*", the literary movement in São Paulo went against all the "isms" and, for this reason, "proclaimed our independence of spirit and feeling" and was, so to speak, a "true revolution in Brazilian thought" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 152, our translation). Cassiano Ricardo said that

this urgent and indispensable offensive of the intelligentsia started in São Paulo as a consequence of its perpetually renewing spirit and as a corollary of the intellectual revolution that it unleashed in 1922, provoking a violent revision of all the processes of art and extending its investigation to the dominant concepts and prejudices [...]. [...] The fruitful shaking caused by this revolutionary intellectual onslaught, which then took place in all the centers of Brazilian activity, destroyed the old literary mentality and created the possibility of erecting [...] the victorious and strong structure of a new Brazil (RICARDO, 1937, p. 391, our translation).

When demarcating the literary origins of the *Bandeira* Movement, the *Bandeirista* leader highlighted three founding elements of the group, all inspired by the 1922 Art Week: criticism of foreignism, literary academicism and the search for Brazilian originality. These three premises, which were inherited from the historical *Bandeiras*, were rearranged in the 1930s to defend a political project opposed to Communism, Integralism and Liberal Democracy, since all these political projects were reflections of foreignness. For the leader of the *Bandeira* Movement, any "foreign ideology can become a social infection. A malignant social infection can lead to the destruction of everything" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 201, our translation). In the deformations that some wanted to spread in Brazil, Cassiano Ricardo argued that the literary "isms" turned into political "isms" with immense ease, meaning that yesterday "it was the literary 'isms'. Today there are the political 'isms'" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 208, our translation).

Cassiano Ricardo pointed out that such "sinister ideologies form the silent and terrible prowl that has invaded our treasure of originality and life in a thousand ways and through a thousand features" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 206). In order to reinforce the criticism of foreignisms, the poets who fought European "isms" in the 1920s, according to the essayist, were Menotti del Picchia, Mario de Andrade, Oswald de Andrade, Guilherme de Almeida, Paulo Prado, Candido

Mota Filho, Rodrigues de Abreu, René Thiollier and Afonso Schmidt. Despite all the examples, the essayist pointed out that the typically Brazilian poets were Mário de Andrade, Menotti del Picchia and Guilherme de Almeida. For the essayist, only these writers reflected "more clearly the meaning of the Bandeira" and the "historical and racial imperative of the plateau. Only these three contributed something original to poetry" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 203, our translation). These poets - Cassiano Ricardo continues - repeated the action of the *bandeirantes* who marked the origins of nationality and created "the poetry of action" in the "place of the poetry of contemplation" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 174, our translation).

In composing an interpretation of the "literary combats" of the 1920s, Cassiano Ricardo (1937) - in the mid-1930s - reconstructs the historical memory of São Paulo modernism. For the essayist, after the Week of '22 "the modernists started arguing with each other", and with this, those from São Paulo "split into various groups" that set out in search of "Brazilian originality" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 159). In an attempt to explain the literary currents of the 1920s, the author highlighted the two wings into which "the revolutionary vanguard split": the influence of Raul Bopp, with his indianism, determined the formation of the "anthropophagic" group, with Oswald de Andrade, Raul Bopp, Oswald Costa and Tarsila do Amaral; the other was made up of Plínio Salgado, Menotti del Picchia, Cândido Motta Filho, Alfredo Elis and Alarico Silveiro with the 'very Brazilian' green-yellow. According to the essayist, there is a direct relationship between literature and politics, and as a means of defending this thesis, the *bandeirista* leader stated that the

anthropophagic movement, made up of a Roussonian return to the primitivism of nature, or tribal communism, was bound to be colored with Bolshevik leftism. The "green-yellow" movement, vividly nationalist, disciplinarian, was a firm and daring march to the right and, with Plínio, it had to be integrated into a fascist form and, with Menotti and Candido Motta Filho, into the original nationalism of the "Bandeira" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 161, our translation).

For Cassiano Ricardo, the Modern Art Week resonated with the "*bandeirante* spirit" of the 17th and 18th centuries to combat "import literature" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 152, our translation). These assumptions, according to the *bandeirista* leader, should be taken up again and transformed into "a new Brazilian conscience" against political extremism in the "present hour", more precisely, in the second half of the 1930s (RICARDO, 1937, p. 152, our translation).

At the same time as the essayist built a bridge between literature and politics, he created a "historical memory" about the Modern Art Week as the origin of the Bandeira Movement's

ideology. According to the *bandeirista* leader, the Bandeira Movement defended the originality sought in the early 1920s and, for this reason, the "new *bandeirantes*" would be the true heirs to the statements of the Modern Art Week. At the "present time", the real enemies of these "new *bandeirantes*" would be the political deformers who sought in every way to introduce theories that were alien to Brazil's ethnic and social characteristics.

The "new *bandeirantes*" were haunted by two ghosts. One that wanted to take them to the right and the other to the left. To exemplify this metaphor, the poem "André de Leão and the devil with red hair" (André de Leão e o demônio de cabelo encarnado) - included in the 1934 version of the poem *Martim Cererê* - is a good example. This poetic text tells the story of the "fifth *bandeirante*" lost in the backlands. In this situation, he came across two "demons" who wanted to get in the way of his destiny. The poet described this feud more clearly in the following fragment of the poem:

assaulted by two formidable mysteries:
like someone going down a path
[...]
when you're suddenly grabbed
by two ghosts with yellow eyes,
terribly alike (face of one, face of another)
who want to lead him in any way they can,
each to their own side,
one by the left arm, the other by the right (RICARDO, 1936, p. 95-96, our translation).

In this fragment, there is a poetic representation of the political debates in which Cassiano Ricardo was involved in the 1930s, since these ghosts of the left and the right refer to the two "outsider ideologies" - Communism and Integralism - that bandeirismo had to combat. At the end of the essay *Brazil in the original (O Brasil no original)*, the essayist transcribed this poem in order to reinforce that the country was "at the crossroads of a great destiny", in which "two mysterious scarecrows [...] assail us, one from the left and the other from the right" (RICARDO, 1937, p. 289, our translation).

By transcribing a poem by *Martim Cererê* (1936) in the essay *Brazil in the Original (O Brasil no original, 1937)*, Cassiano Ricardo placed the two literary productions on the same level. The poem and the essay intended to re-read the historical *Bandeiras* of the 17th and 18th centuries, both works were heirs to green-yellow modernism, and furthermore, these two texts contained the principles that would guide the fight against Communism and Integralism.

In the course of this plot, Brazilianness was persuaded by the two ghosts that got in the way of the search for destiny, so the "fifth *bandeirante*" found himself lost, but the *curupira*

told him the way: go "this way, straight" (RICARDO, 1936, p. 98, our translation). At this "crossroads", Cassiano Ricardo (1937) wanted to prevent Brazil from going "over the cliff to the left" and, even worse, being led "by violence" down the "wrong path to the right", the motto was: the "path is one: forward!" (p. 290, our translation).

By using the allegory of the *bandeirante* lost in the backlands, the poet re-signified the adventure narrated in his poem to represent the political dilemmas of the moment. In this adventure, the solution would not be to follow the path of the left, much less the path of the right, but the path of the center, very "straight". According to the *bandeirista* leader, going "straight" would be the recipe for "exorcising" the demons of the left and right - which stand in the way of moving forward.

Bandeirantes, bandeirismo and revisionism

Regarding the mythology of the *bandeirante*, Ricardo Luiz de Souza (2007) points out that we need to think about it beyond the terms of the positivity conferred by the writings of the early 20th century. The author reminds us that the reading of the *bandeirantes'* deeds also had its critics, including Aires de Casal (1976), D'Alincourt (1953) and Xavier da Veiga (1998), all of whom wrote before the first quarter of the 19th century. Following this line of reasoning, Antônio C. Ferreira (2002) points out that the

discourses from which the *bandeirante* mythology was developed were not, therefore, only those that described it in its positivity [...] The critics of the *bandeirante* mythology started from a negative conception of São Paulo itself, seen in Rio de Janeiro at the end of the 19th century as *caboclo* or *sertanejo*, with the *bandeirantes* entering Brazilian history as rude and violent men, including the fact that they were on the fringes of Rio's literate circles (FERREIRA, 2002, p. 34-48).

The author emphasizes that it was "mainly after Capistrano de Abreu that the image of the *bandeirante* began to be revised, as well as the role he played, associated [...] with violence and indigenous slavery" (FERREIRA, 2002, p. 166, our translation). We say that Cassiano Ricardo was heir to the literary current that exalted the positivity of the deeds of the *bandeirantes*, especially from the texts of Afonso d'E. Taunay (1922), Paulo Setúbal (1928) and Alfredo Ellis Jr (1934). He was a tributary of these interpretations and, like other writers from São Paulo, appropriated the *bandeirante* symbol as an expression of the pioneering, fearless, haughty, determined, independent, loyal and leading personality (COELHO, 2015). The same interpretation had already been pointed out by Lúcia Lippi Oliveira (2000), who states

that Cassiano Ricardo highlighted the *bandeirante* as the person responsible for entering the backlands, for expanding the frontiers of the country and for shaping the personality of São Paulo.

Could we think that Cassiano Ricardo spearheaded some kind of negative revisionism by reinterpreting the figure of the *bandeirante* to remedy the political shortcomings of the 1930s? We suppose so, because the revisionist-negacionist approach promoted by Cassiano Ricardo was fundamental to the elaboration of the "*bandeirante* myth" as the builders of the nation. Above all, this procedure was responsible for the crystallization of the conceptions that the modernism of the 1920s was eminently a São Paulo movement and, like everything else in Ricardo's imagination, was heir to the supposed "*bandeirante* spirit" that goes back in time. In order to further substantiate our hypothesis, we need to make some notes on the relationship between "revisionism" and "negationism".

For Enzo Travesso (p. 69, 2004), "revisionism" is a word that can be interpreted in many ways and "which, in the course of the twentieth century, has acquired the most different and contradictory meanings, lending itself to multiple uses and sometimes giving rise to misunderstandings" (our translation). The author emphasizes that by positioning themselves as spokesmen for a "revisionist" historical school, the negacionists "managed to contaminate the language and thus create considerable confusion about the concept of revisionism." (TRAVESSO, 2004, p. 69, our translation).

Along the same lines, Cordeiro and Rollemberg (2001) believe that the

term revisionism has acquired, especially over the course of the 20th century, a significant polysemy: sometimes appropriated in a positive way, sometimes pejoratively; sometimes used - in a variety of ways - in heated political and ideological disputes, sometimes appropriated by academic and intellectual quarrels - which are also by no means foreign to political and ideological disputes; sometimes approaching and merging with the idea of *negation* (p. 60, our translation).

In order to delimit the differences between historiographical revision and revisionism, Travesso (2004) draws attention to some methodological requirements for defining the necessary practice of historiographical revisionism, including the responsible use of historical sources. The author points to the fact that

the discovery of new sources, the exploration of archives, the enrichment of testimonies, can shed new light on events that were thought to be perfectly well known [...] Sometimes the introduction of a new paradigm can give

significance to previously ignored sources (TRAVESSO, 2004, p. 71, our translation).

For Travesso (2004), "history is always written in the present tense and the questioning that guides our exploration of the past varies and changes according to the times, the generations, the transformations of society and the paths of collective memory." (p. 72, our translation). We reinforce the thesis that revisions of history are legitimate and even necessary practices, since they start from the problems of the present and the use and interpretation of new sources. In this way, Travesso (2004) stresses that certain revisions that qualify as revisionism imply a negative and nefarious resource - also understood as "negationism" - which must be combated, since they are appropriated without any ethical awareness.

Still on this differentiation, Moraes (2011, p. 7, our translation) reminds us that the "specific forms and patterns of the historiographical text are socially established in a community of a specific type". According to the author, there is a

level of abstract elaboration that provides theoretical and methodological foundations for procedures for writing and presenting results, means of obtaining evidence, ways of establishing causal relationships between propositions, ways of conducting controversies etc.... (MORAES, 2011, p. 7, our translation).

The author also emphasizes that the "criteria for the validity of historiographical writing establish a standard for writing which, even if not written down, forms a decisive part of *the professional habitus of historians*" (MORAES, 2011, p. 7, our translation). It is on the basis of these characteristic elements of historiography that Moraes (2011) considers the characterization of the negationist practice. From the point of view of its procedure, the author points out that

negationism is not based on the presentation of theses, but on the establishment of a proclamation [...] and the search for the means to make this proclamation plausible to a readership that has no tools at its disposal to evaluate its propositions (MORAES, 2011, p. 10, our translation).

Even though the author does not present a thesis, he supposes that the negationists try to use some similar resources used by historiography. However, this textual construction, which is similar to historiographical writings, is not part of the disciplinary field of History, but rather an "*illusion of historiography*" (MORAES, 2011, p. 11, our translation). Thus,

negationism as a *fraud* in a double sense, materialized through the falsification of legitimacy criteria [...] On the one hand, it is a *falsified historiography*, that

is, a text that consciously falsifies its legitimacy references, claiming the character of historiographical writing without being so, presenting forms that are proper to the historiographical text [...] On the other hand, it is a *falsified past*, which is also consciously produced, anchored in the refusal of all evidence that contradicts it, claiming the character of verifiable propositions without being so (MORAES, 2011, p. 15, our translation).

Cordeiro and Rollemberg (2001) also differentiate historiography from "negationism" by drawing parallels between the terms "revisionism" and "negationism". According to the authors, despite being confused, these terms refer to very different issues: the "idea of *revisionism* refers to initiatives to revise interpretations of past facts and processes; *negationism*, in turn, to initiatives to deny them" (CORDEIRO; ROLLEMBERG, 2001, p. 61, our translation). To try to resolve the complexity of the issue, one point "seems crystal clear: revisionism is enlightening and indispensable in the production of historical knowledge, while negationism is baleful and obscurantist, the very negation of History" (CORDEIRO; ROLLEMBERG, 2001, p. 61, our translation).

Since "revisionism" is something necessary for historical development and we are careful not to fall into the pejorative sense of the term, we have chosen to refer to Cassiano Ricardo's interpretation as revisionism-negationist. The *bandeirista* leader's re-signification of the past was based on a set of readings about the *Bandeirante*, but he did not seek to interpret the fact itself by criticizing the sources. In turn, the cultural consumption of works belonging to the tradition based on the heroicization of historical characters had a specific objective: to re-signify Brazilian modernism and the historical past in order to meet the demands of the 1930s.

As far as Cassiano Ricardo's reinterpretation of the *bandeirante* is concerned, his analysis did not necessarily go through historical procedures, such as analyzing historical sources, but only resorted to the reinterpretations of intellectuals who consecrated the heroic figure of the *bandeirantes* and to personal opinions. These strategies found in the essay *Brazil in the Original (O Brasil no original, 1937)* introduced, according to our apprehensions, a revisionism close to "negationism" that sought to rehabilitate the historical event of the 17th and 18th century *Bandeiras*.

Even though the professionalization of historians¹¹ was non-existent in the 1930s and the *bandeirante* leader was known as a poet, Cassiano Ricardo - through his essay - can be seen

¹¹ This fact was only legally consolidated in Brazil in 2020, but we must remember that Brazilian historiography had a tradition that dated back to the creation of the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute (IHGB) in 1838. This historiographical current was marked by great historians, including Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen, Capistrano de Abreu, Manuel de Oliveira Lima and Afonso d'Escragnoille Taunay.

as an example of historiographical revisionism-negationist. Despite the critical views of the *bandeirantes* elaborated in the first half of the 19th century, the generation of São Paulo thinkers of the first three decades of the 20th century, including Cassiano Ricardo, denied the violence of the *Bandeiras* of the 17th and 18th centuries.

We understand that these poetic, essayistic and historiographical works consolidated a denialist revisionism about the main legacy of the *Bandeiras* of the 17th and 18th centuries: the destruction of indigenous cultures and the enslavement of native peoples. From this perspective, we use the words of Moraes (2011) to understand the thinking of Cassiano Ricardo (1937) as an intellectual negationist who brought to the public a pseudo-past markedly constructed by false narratives about the past. It is important to emphasize the weight of these interpretations (heroic visions of the *bandeirantes*) which, only in the 1950s with Vianna Moog and his *Pioneiros e Bandeirantes* (*Pioneiros e Bandeirantes*, 1954), began to be questioned, but which remain in the 21st century in the popular imagination of some Brazilian regions.

Final considerations

In the 1930s, the federal government had to mediate the pressures for the reconstitutionalization of the country, the defence of liberal ideals, the appeal of the Integralists and the communist "danger". In the years between 1935 and 1937, the Bandeira Movement placed itself in this political arena. In the dispute between the various political groups, the "new *bandeirantes*" presented themselves as the only bearers of a "new mentality" that would defend Brazilian originality. Their representatives wanted to combat disintegrating ideologies and defend the construction of a strong state as necessary ways to maintain the spiritual unity of the country. In this context, the Ricardian *bandeirante* would demarcate the nation's territorial and spiritual frontier against "outsider ideologies".

Making use of writing resources, Cassiano Ricardo moved from the literary field to the political field, as well as between the historical past and the mythification of "heroes" to expose a supposed superiority of São Paulo over the rest of the country. The essayist and leader of the Bandeira Movement intertwined all these elements to create a sense of the heroic heritage of the past in the present of São Paulo, not to mention the nation. This re-signification by the essayist also served as a self-image of the "new *bandeirantes*" as part of the same historical, literary and political process. For Cassiano Ricardo, only a mentality anchored in the "*bandeirante* spirit" would be able to guarantee "Brazil in its originality". This is one of the

main aims of the Bandeira Movement's program: to recover the forces of the past in order to form an intellectuality that would protect the nation against foreign influences in politics. This proposal would guide the nation on the path to finding its nationality through the incorporation of the "populations of the interior", the installation of a Strong State and the strengthening of "Nationalist Social Democracy".

The fact that the *bandeirista* ideology was at the service of the Homeland may be one of the main characteristics that brings this ideology closer to the conceptions dear to revisionism-negationist, given that this thinking distorted the past to meet the needs of the present. As we have seen, this premise was readily expressed in the epigraph of the essay analyzed in this study. Another characteristic element of Ricardian revisionism-negationist was the network of authors who sought to disseminate the same interpretations. As an example, the works that would be launched by the Cultural Department of the Bandeira, which would form part of a set of texts of a historical, political and social nature that would contribute to this revisionist-negationist view of the historical *Bandeiras* of the 17th and 18th centuries.

As we have seen, Cassiano Ricardo argued that São Paulo modernism and the Bandeira Movement were part of the same historical continuity that began in the 17th century with the *bandeirantes*. This association was the main strategy for subsidizing the role of the historical legacy of the São Paulo *Bandeiras* in Brazilian society in the 1930s, which was marked by a revisionist-negationist perspective. The intellectual did not try to explain the historical fact itself, but to build arguments to justify his worldviews in the present. As you can see, we have presented how the campaign undertaken by the "new *bandeirantes*" organized political propaganda based on false assessments of Brazil's historical past. It is for this reason that it is necessary to return to the study of this period and the political disputes of the 1930s. In other words, a return to the historical investigations of this period is extremely important in order to understand how Ricardian thinking was organized under the aegis of the Estado Novo.

REFERENCES

- ABAL, F. C. Um risco para a história: normalização, revisionismo e reacionarismo. **Revista Hydra**, [S. l.], v. 4, n. 7, dez., 2019. Available: <https://periodicos.unifesp.br/index.php/hydra/article/view/9709>. Access: 15 Dec. 2021.
- ABUD, K. M. **O sangue intemorato e as nobilíssimas tradições (a construção de um símbolo paulista: o bandeirante)**. 1985. 342 f. Tese (Doutorado em História) - Faculdade de Filosofia Letras e Ciências Humanas, Universidade de São Paulo, São Paulo, 1985.
- "BANDEIRA" o que pretende a nova organização de cultura e nacionalismo. **S. Paulo**, [S. l.], ano 1, n. 9, p. 1, outubro de 1936.
- CASAL, M. A. **Corografia brasílica ou Relação histórico-geográfica do Reino do Brasil**. Belo Horizonte/São Paulo: Itatiaia/EDUSP, 1976.
- CHARTIER, R. **História cultural: entre práticas e representações**. Rio de Janeiro: Difel-Bertrand, 1990. 239 p.
- CHARTIER, R. **À Beira da Falésia**. A História entre Certezas e Inquietudes. Trad. Patrícia Chittoni Ramos. Porto Alegre: Ed. Universidade/UFRGS, 2002. 277 p.
- COELHO, G. L. S. **O bandeirante que caminha no tempo: apropriações do poema "Martim Cererê" e o pensamento político de Cassiano Ricardo**. 2015. 346 f. Tese (Doutorado em História) - Universidade Federal de Goiás, Goiânia, 2015.
- COELHO, G. L. S. Cassiano Ricardo e Martim Cererê: um poema em transformação (1927-1936). **Estudos Históricos Rio de Janeiro**, [S. l.], v. 30, n. 62, p. 623-642, set./dez., 2017.
- COELHO, G. L. S. A revista S. Paulo (1936): fotomontagem e propaganda política na década de 1930. **Topoi**, Rio de Janeiro, v. 24, n. 53, p. 535-560, maio/ago. 2023. Available: <https://www.scielo.br/j/topoi/a/4qMKdWrtyCmNgd5ndWzC8FC/?lang=pt>. Access: 15 Sept. 2023.
- COUTINHO, A. **A Literatura Brasileira: modernismo**. 2. ed. Rio de Janeiro: Editora Sul Americana, 1970.
- D'ALINCOURT, L. **Memória sobre a viagem do porto de Santos à cidade de Cuiabá**. São Paulo: Martins, 1953.
- ELLIS JR, A. **Populações Paulistas**. São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1934.
- FERREIRA, A. C. Fonte fecunda. In: PINSKY, C. B.; LUCA, T. R. (org.) **O Historiador e suas Fontes**. São Paulo: Contexto, 2009. p. 61-91.
- GOMES, Â. M. C. (coord.). **Regionalismo e centralização política**. Rio de Janeiro: Nova Fronteira, 1980. 501 p.
- JORNAL ANHANGUERA. Nº 1 – São Paulo – Sábado, 26 de junho de 1937.

MAUTINHO, J. **A paulistanidade revista: algumas reflexões sobre um discurso político.** *Tempo soc.*, [S. l.], v. 3, n 1-2, p. 109-117, 1991. Available: <https://www.scielo.br/j/ts/a/JRRwG5CpCBnRvJYcTbc87Ds/abstract/?lang=pt> Access: 15 Dec. 2021.

MORAES, L. E. S. O Negacionismo e o problema da legitimidade da escrita sobre o Passado. In: SIMPÓSIO NACIONAL DE HISTÓRIA, 26., 2011, São Paulo. **Anais [...]**. São Paulo: [s. n.], 2011. Available: http://www.snh2011.anpuh.org/resources/anais/14/1312810501_ARQUIVO_ANPUH-2011-ARTIGO-Luis_Edmundo-Moraes.pdf. Access: 15 Dec. 2021.

NOVOS LIVROS DA “BANDEIRA”. **Jornal Anhanguera**, [S. l.], ano 1, n. 2, p. 5, 28 jun. 1937.

OLIVEIRA, L. L. **Americanos: representações da identidade nacional do Brasil e nos EUA.** Belo Horizonte: Ed. UFMG, 2000, 224 p.

OLIVEIRA, L. L. Brasil e Estados Unidos: fronteiras geográficas e culturais. In: SERPA, É. C. (Orgs.). **Escritas da História: intelectuais e poder.** Goiânia: Ed. UCG, 2004. p. 167-188.

RICARDO, C. **Martim Cererê.** São Paulo: Ed. Novíssima, 1934.

RICARDO, C. **Martim Cererê.** São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1936.

RICARDO, C. **O Brasil no Original.** 2. ed. Coleção Cultural da Bandeira São Paulo, 1937. (Revista dos Tribunais).

ROLLEMBERG, D.; CORDEIRO, J. M. Revisionismo e negacionismo: controvérsias. **História, histórias**, [S. l.], v. 9, n. 17, jan./jun., 2021.

SETUBAL, P. **A bandeira de Fernão Dias: romance histórico.** São Paulo: Editora Nacional, 1928.

SOUZA, R. L. A mitologia bandeirante: construção de sentidos. **História Social**, Campinas, n. 13, p. 151-171, 2007. Available: <http://www.ifch.unicamp.br/ojs/index.php/rhs/article/viewFile/215/207>. Access: 06 Apr. 2015

TRAVERSO, E. Revisión y revisionismo. **Pasajes: Revista de pensamiento contemporáneo**, [S. l.], n. 14, p. 69-76, 2004. Available: <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=898111>. Access: 15 Dec. 2021.

VEIGA, J. X. **Efemérides mineiras, 1684-1897.** Belo Horizonte: Centro de Estudos Históricos e Culturais da Fundação João Pinheiro, 1998.

VELLOSO, M. **História & Modernismo.** Belo Horizonte: Autêntica Editora, 2010.

VIDAL-NAQUET, P. **Os assassinos de memória: um Eichmann de papel e outros ensaios sobre o revisionismo.** Campinas, SP: Papirus, 1988.

CRediT Author Statement

Acknowledgements: I want to extend my thanks to my daughter Eleonora Seabra Francisco and my wife Prof. Dr. Thálita Maria Francisco da Silva.

Financing: Not applicable.

Conflict of interest: There are no conflicts of interest.

Ethical approval: Not applicable.

Availability of data and material: The essays analyzed are available at the Cassiano Ricardo Cultural Foundation in São José dos Campos, São Paulo.

Authors' contribution: Not applicable.

Processing and editing: Editora Ibero-Americana de Educação.
Proofreading, formatting, normalization and translation.

