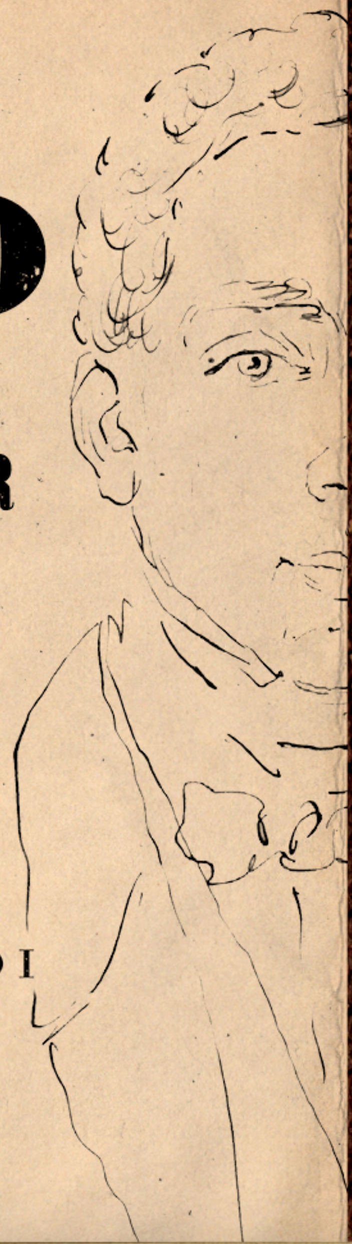
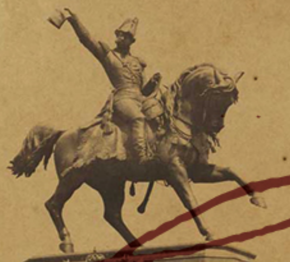
FRANCISCO DE PAULA BRITO

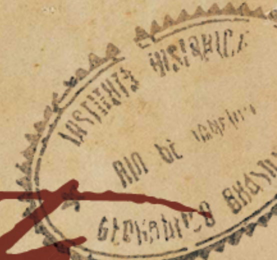


A BLACK PUBLISHER IN IMPERIAL BRAZIL

RODRIGO CAMARGO DE GODOI

Translated by H. Sabrina Gledhill





Francisco de Paula Brito

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A Black Publisher in Imperial Brazil

RODRIGO CAMARGO DE GODOI

Translated by H. Sabrina Gledhill

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY PRESS
Nashville, Tennessee

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Originally published in Brazil as *Um editor no impérioi: Francisco de Paula Brito (1809–1861)*, copyright © 2016 by Rodrigo Camargo de Godoi

Cover images: details from Praça da Constituição; the signature of Captain Martinho Pereira de Brito, Paula Brito's grandfather; portrait of Francisco de Paula Brito by Louis Alexis Boulanger (1842, courtesy of the IHGB); a portrait of Simao the mariner (1853, courtesy of the IHGB); Dous de Dezembro press plan; and Constitution Square shortly after the unveiling of an equestrian statue of Pedro I

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Godoi, Rodrigo Camargo de, author. | Gledhill, Sabrina, translator.
Title: Francisco de Paula Brito : a black publisher in imperial Brazil / Rodrigo Camargo de Godoi, ; translated by H. Sabrina Gledhill.
Other titles: Editor no Império. English
Description: Nashville : Vanderbilt University Press, [2020] | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2020019523 (print) | LCCN 2020019524 (ebook) | ISBN 9780826500168 (paperback ; acid-free paper) | ISBN 9780826500175 (hardcover ; acid-free paper) | ISBN 9780826500182 (epub) | ISBN 9780826500199 (pdf)
Subjects: LCSH: Brito, Francisco de Paula, 1809–1861. | Publishers and publishing—Brazil—Rio de Janeiro—Biography. | Publishers and publishing—Brazil—Rio de Janeiro—History—19th century. | Poets, Brazilian—19th century—Biography.
Classification: LCC Z521.3.B75 G6313 2020 (print) | LCC Z521.3.B75 (ebook) | DDC 070.5092 [B]—dc23

LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020019523
LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020019524

In memory of João Batista de Godoy,
my beloved grandfather.

I've seen Daddy sad because nobody buys what he writes. He studied hard and still studies hard, and the other day he had a fight with Lalau, who makes his book—his books, because Daddy has written lots and lots of books—on the machine—those men who make our books on machines are called publishers—but when Lalau isn't here, Daddy calls Lalau all sorts of names that I can't repeat.

HILDA HILST, *O caderno rosa de Lori Lamby (São Paulo: Globo, 2005), 19.*

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Foreword to the Brazilian Edition

JEFFERSON CANO, Department of Literature,
University of Campinas (Unicamp)

WHEN FRANCISCO DE Paula Brito died, the young journalist Machado de Assis devoted his Comments of the Week column in the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* to his friend:

> Yet another! This year must be counted as an illustrious obituary, where everyone, friend and citizen, can see inscribed more than one name dear to the heart or soul.
>
> Long is the list of those who, in the space of these twelve months, which are about to expire, have fallen into the tremendous embrace of that wanton who, as the poet said, does not discriminate her lovers.
>
> Now it is a man who, due to his social and political virtues, his intelligence and his love of work, had achieved widespread esteem.
>
> He began as a printer and died a printer. In that modest role, he enjoyed the friendship of everyone around him.
>
> Paula Brito set a rare and good example. He had faith in his political convictions, sincerely believing in the results of their application; tolerant, he was not unjust with his adversaries; sincere, he never compromised with them.

> He was also a friend, above all a friend. He loved young people because he knew that they are the hope of his homeland, and because he loved them, he extended them his protection as much as he could.
>
> Instead of dying [and] leaving a fortune, which he could have done, he died as poor as he was in life, thanks to the extensive employment he gave to his income and the generosity that led him to share what he earned from his labor.
>
> In these times of selfishness and calculation, we should mourn the loss of men who, like Paula Brito, stand out from the common mass of men.[1]

Half a century later, another statement, this time from the memoirs of Salvador de Mendonça, would become an almost obligatory reference about the role of Paula Brito in mid-nineteenth century Rio de Janeiro:

> In Largo do Rocio [also known as Praça da Constituição], outside Paula Brito's establishment, across the street, there were two benches where, on Saturday afternoons, the following individuals would get together regularly to converse about literature: Machado de Assis, then a clerk at Paula Brito's bookstore and press; Manuel Antônio de Almeida, a writer for the *Correio mercantil* and author of *Memoirs of a Militia Sergeant*; Henrique César Muzzio, a physician without a clinic and highly esteemed theater critic; Casimiro de Abreu, poet and clerk in a retail establishment; José Antonio, treasury employee and author of the humorous *Lembranças* [Memories] and, finally, this writer, then a preparatory school student. Many times, as he walked from Paula Brito's shop to his own home across the square, Joaquim Manuel de Macedo, the creator of the Brazilian novel, would come and sit with us, honest and sincere, and more than once he was accompanied by Gonçalves Dias, with his lean body, melancholy aspect, and genial gaze, and Araújo Porto-Alegre, with his bear-like physique and the perennial youthfulness of a healthy soul and body.[2]

Those who compare these two quotations today can easily see how time has imposed on Paula Brito's memory a different meaning from that which was still present in Machado de Assis's affectionate recollection of him. The publisher's political virtues seemed to have been permanently erased, along with his image as the protector of youth. Indeed, Paula Brito's importance during that period seemed no longer to be found in himself but in those with whom he interacted—the most outstanding figures on the literary

scene of his time and the future. His was almost a name that hitched a ride in the footnotes of literary history, solely because he kept good company.

Nothing could be more unfair. The book the reader is now perusing reveals a man with a career so rich that historians rarely have the good fortune to find his like; a man who, if he were a fictional character, would be what Lukács called a *type*, in which "all contradictions—the most important social, ethical, and psychological contradictions of a time—are linked in a single living unit."[3] But Paula Brito was not a fictional character, and Rodrigo Camargo de Godoi is no Balzac—despite a reference here and there. He is a historian who is well up to the task imposed by his subject.

"All contradictions" seems like an overstatement, but it is not. The decades between 1830 and 1860 were rife with contradictions, and it is hard to think of any that did not have a deep impact on Paula Brito's life. The intersection of racial and political identities when both were formed through the press would find in a printer descended from slaves a focal point around which the most significant tensions of his time emerged. The intersection of the individual with his enterprising ambitions and dreams and the flow of capital that was seeking new outlets after the definitive end of the transatlantic slave trade would give the publisher opportunities to rise and fall, test the limits of protection, and experience the vicissitudes of speculation.

All of this is skillfully handled by Rodrigo Camargo de Godoi, who shows the reader how these tensions ran through Paula Brito's life and (reprising the "hook" of Lukács's definition) are joined together in a living unit. I hope the reader will forgive this repetition, but there is good reason for it. After all, the idea that the life of the subject, represented in writing, could constitute a unit in which the very (contradictory) unity of the historic process is reflected is common both to the interpretation undertaken by a literary critic and the process of writing undertaken by a historian who devotes himself to a biography. Going beyond writing, does such unity exist? Once again, this is a highly sensitive question for practitioners of both disciplines, and neither will find an easy answer—much less a safe one. For many, of course, it is pointless to pose it, but if we accept the question, this book becomes even more interesting—not by answering it, of course, but by permitting us to think about it every step of the way.

Acknowledgments

ONE COLD MORNING in June 2017, I received a message from Professor Celso Thomas Castilho, of Vanderbilt University, inquiring if I would be interested in scheduling a Skype conversation about a possible translation of my book, which had just been released in Brazil by the University of São Paulo Press. Celso had no idea how happy that message made me, so I would like to begin by thanking him for his hard work, without which the reader might not be holding this book in their hands. In this regard, I would also like to thank my editors for their support throughout the entire process, which involved submitting the original proposal and its approval and publication: Carla Fontana, from the University of São Paulo Press, and Zachary Gresham, from the Vanderbilt University Press. Through them, I extend my thanks to all the workers involved in the production of this book, from the copyeditors to the printers.

The maps that illustrate the book were produced and kindly ceded by my friend, the geographer and professor Tiago Pires. I owe Professor Bruno Guimarães Martins, who also studies the life and work of Paula Brito, a debt of thanks for his generosity in sharing the prints of the publisher's family that he found in the Brazilian Historical and Geographic Institute.

I would like to thank the British Brazilianist and historian Sabrina Gledhill for her superb translation. I cannot say how much I have learned from seeing the solutions she proposed for the English edition. I am therefore grateful to the São Paulo Research Foundation for its grant for the transla-

tion (FAPESP Process no. 2018/11281-4), recognizing the central role which that agency has played in promoting scientific research in the state of São Paulo and Brazil. In addition to the translation, FAPESP financed both my original research and the publication of this book in Portuguese. This edition was financed in part by the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior—Brasil (CAPES)—Finance Code 001.

Many thanks to my colleagues at the Department of History and the Research Center on the Social History of Culture (CECULT) at the University of Campinas for their warm welcome. Despite the protests of Silvia Hunold Lara, I can once again affirm that she and Jefferson Cano, Robert Slenes, and Sidney Chalhoub are the mentors who have enabled me to improve as a historian, and who continue to do so. I am also immensely grateful to Flavia Peral, who is responsible for technical and administrative support at CECULT. Without her, our work would be impossible.

At the time I was researching this book, Brazil was a different place. I belong to the generation of historians born between the end of the dictatorship and the beginning of the process of redemocratization—a generation that grew up during what was perhaps the most extensive expansion program for higher education ever seen in Brazilian history. I remember our enthusiasm well, as many, like me, were the first in our families from all parts of Brazil's interior and low-income urban peripheries to have access to university and teaching careers. I would like to see that enthusiasm once again in my students, whom I thank for the daily lessons of perseverance in these difficult times.

Campinas, October 17, 2019

Introduction

ALTHOUGH THE RECORDS are extremely scarce on this point, all indications are that the portrait of Francisco de Paula Brito that illustrates his book of poetry, a posthumous work edited by Moreira de Azevedo, was a lithograph based on a painting unveiled in the headquarters of the Petalogical Society on the evening of December 15, 1862—a year after the publisher's death.[1] In any event, the portrait matches the physical description that Moreira de Azevedo has left us of his friend: a man who was "brown in color, slim, of average height, beardless, and when he died," at the age of fifty-three, "his hair was just starting to go gray."[2] The artist's skill not only managed to capture the features of the late Paula Brito, but the portrait has played an important role as a "place of memory," according to Pierre Nora, whose function "is to stop time, to block the work of oblivion, affixing a state of things, immortalizing death."[3]

Paula Brito cut a good figure by being immortalized with a calm visage, smartly dressed in a sober black coat, white shirt, and tie. In this regard, although it may have been posthumous, this portrait tells us a great deal. If his skin color, which the artist did not attempt to hide, is a manifest sign of his ancestors' experience of slavery, his clothes leave no doubt that this was a citizen of African ancestry who had gained a good position in his society.[4] The son and grandson of freedpersons, he was a merchant, bookseller, printer, and publisher who worked in Rio de Janeiro for three decades, between 1831 and 1861. Indeed, it was through his work and the bonds of

FIGURE 1. Posthumous portrait of Francisco de Paula Brito (1863)

solidarity that he formed during his life that made Brito a kind of catalyst in the cultural and literary scene of the capital of Imperial Brazil, gaining renown in his lifetime. In such cases, once a life has ended, no sooner is the body lying in its grave than a profusion of panegyric writings is produced, crystallizing a given image of the deceased for the use and memory of posterity, going beyond portraits and the unveiling of portraits.

The "memorialist construction" built up around the publisher, understood as the transformation of the historical character through history itself, goes through three clearly distinct phases.[5] This is true both in literary history, in the history of books and reading in Brazil, and in studies of Machado de Assis, in which Paula Brito is usually an obligatory presence. Beginning with the first biography published in the *Correio mercantil* newspaper weeks after his death, many of those who wrote about the publisher were unanimous about his altruism, which led to the perception of his first being an "impoverished patron of the arts," then a "pioneering publisher," and, more recently, a "Liberal Freemason."[6] This demonstrates that Francisco de Paula Brito is far from being an unexplored subject and that, in a way, the problem proposed in this book, based on a study of his life, is not unprecedented. Machado de Assis put it very precisely in one of his essays, in which he lavished praise on the French publisher Baptiste Louis Garnier in January 1865: "Speaking of Mr. Garnier, and then of Paula Brito, is to bring them together with a common idea: Paula Brito was the first publisher worthy of the name that we had among us. Garnier now occupies that role, with the differences wrought by time and the vast relations he has established outside the country."[7]

With a view to contributing to the history of print culture in Brazil, this book seeks to turn Machado de Assis's statement, which is well known in the literature, into a question, and on that basis, to attempt to understand the historical conditions that made the emergence of the publisher possible in nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro.

Although printers like Charles-Joseph Panckoucke were also working as publishers in the eighteenth century, employing a number of practices that were previously unheard of in France's book trade, several authors agree that it was in the first half of the nineteenth century, around 1830, that publishers began to appear as entrepreneurs in the market of printed cultural goods. Therefore, we can initially consider that companies like Blackwood in Edinburgh and Ticknor and Fields in Boston, as well as the Michel and Calmann Lévy brothers in Paris, George Palmer Putnam in New York, and Francisco

de Paula Brito in Rio de Janeiro, almost simultaneously became entrepreneurs in the expanding universe of newspapers, magazines, books, and other publications.[8] The defining factor in this process is the gradual specialization of publishers, who began setting themselves apart from traditional printers and booksellers, acting like the other entrepreneurs of the arts that emerged at that time, such as theater impresarios. Thus, according to Christine Haynes, while in seventeenth-century France *éditeurs* were the scholars responsible for compiling and editing works in different genres, the meaning of the term *éditeur* changes dramatically as it designates the "capitalists who assumed the risk of producing the work of a (dead or living) author." Accordingly, "the éditeur was defined by his role in investing capital, both financial and human, to create literary commodities—and monetary profits."[9]

Although in certain cases, as Paula Brito's career demonstrates, the publisher was responsible for the production and sale of printed works, as of the 1830s it was this new actor that, according to Roger Chartier and Henri-Jean Martin, began reorganizing the book world by "controlling authors, putting the printers to work and supplying retail bookstores." In an article coauthored with Odile Martin, Henri-Jean Martin identifies the publication of illustrated books as the beginning of the awareness of the originality of the work of publishers in France, suggesting the importance of the modernization of the printing industry in that process.[10] Addressing this problem, Christine Haynes shifts the focus of her analysis of technological change to politics. According to Haynes, the specialization of éditeurs in France might have come a long way since the seventeenth century, when that branch first appeared during the formation of booksellers' guilds. In the following century, however, a single printer or book merchant could be responsible for the production and distribution chains for printed matter, so much so that by 1820 they were called printer-booksellers. Thus, Haynes believes that the capitalist publisher emerged between 1770 and 1830, in the wake of a series of liberal reforms of the laws governing the French book trade. Such reforms changed intellectual property rights, revised market restrictions, and reduced the powers of censorship bodies. Consequently, individuals who did not belong to the traditional corporations that controlled the book market in the ancien régime were free to go into that business. At the same time, the press laws enacted by the new constitutional regimes to replace the censorship bodies characteristic of the ancien régime had to deal with responsibility for what was being printed, and publishers were part of this new "blame economy," alongside printers, booksellers, and authors.[11]

The bill for a law "against crimes of abuse of freedom of the press" tabled at the June 10, 1826, session of the General Legislative Assembly of the Empire of Brazil demonstrates that, when it came to establishing the legal responsibilities of publishers, the Brazilian situation was similar to that in France. The first articles of Title II of the bill established that those held responsible for press crimes would first be the authors, but since their anonymity was guaranteed by law, printers, publishers, and booksellers would be legally responsible for the content of the printed matter, in precisely that order.[12] Similarly, the dictionaries published in the Empire at that time clearly defined the functions of *editores* (publishers), not confusing them, for example, with printers.[13] However, going beyond legal and semantic abstractions, this book will focus on Paula Brito's life to investigate the historical circumstances that converged to bring about the emergence of the publisher in Brazil—circumstances forged in competition with French publications and through political alliances.

Thus, despite covering the story of five generations of Francisco Paula Brito's family, enslaved men and women who gained their manumission in the eighteenth century, this book focuses mainly on the protagonist's activities between the 1830s and 1850s. His career encompassed watershed moments in Brazilian history in the first half of the nineteenth century. Paula Brito was born just one year after Portugal's Royal Court was transferred to Rio de Janeiro in 1808, fleeing the invasion by Napoleon's troops. The impact of Prince Regent João's flight to the richest part of the vast Portuguese Overseas Empire would be irreversible, culminating in the process that led to the independence and formation of the Brazilian nation state. Moreover, it is important to note that, unlike the Spanish colonies in the Americas, some of which had enjoyed the benefits of printing presses since the sixteenth century, the situation was very different in Portugal's dominions in the Americas. Except for the press of Antônio Isidoro da Fonseca, which operated briefly in Rio de Janeiro in 1747, it was only after the arrival of the prince regent and his family that the Royal Press was established in that city, marking the beginning of the systematic use of printing presses in Portuguese America.[14]

In addition to the Royal Press, the city of Rio de Janeiro also benefited from several improvements made after the arrival of the court, from the Botanical Gardens to the magnificent Royal Library. In the years that followed, the rise of coffee planting in the provinces of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Minas Gerais produced a political elite that was actively involved

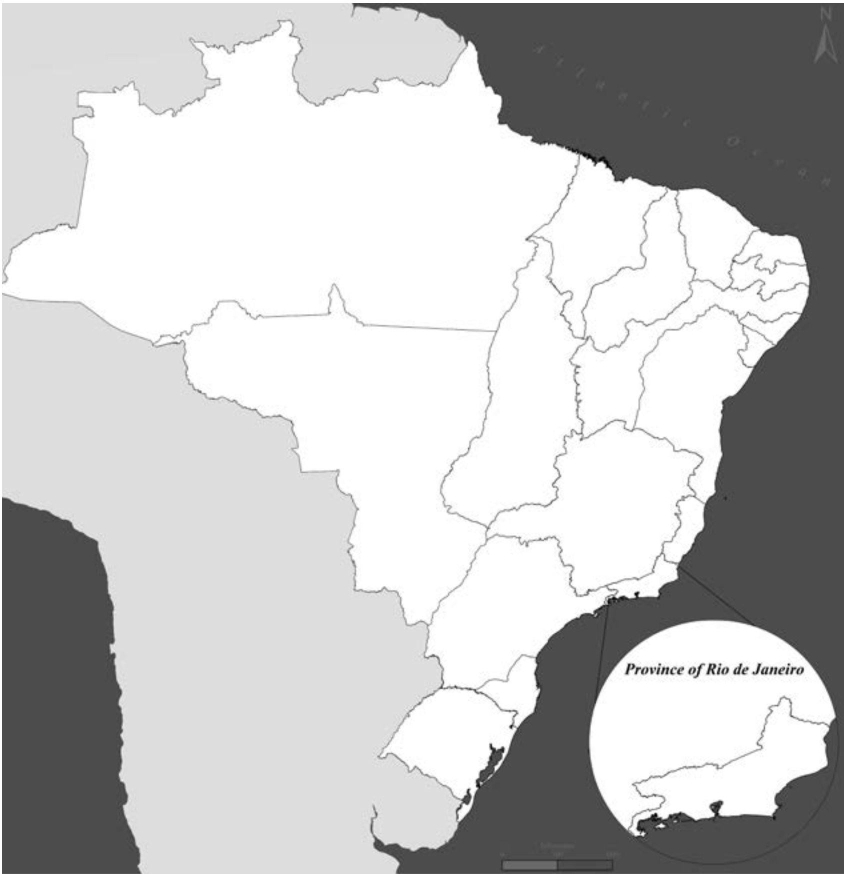

FIGURE 2. The Brazilian Empire (1846)

in the formation of the Brazilian nation state, while drastically changing the demographics of the nascent Brazilian Empire due to the unprecedented expansion of the transatlantic slave trade. However, it was not just the southeastern plantations that made use of the abundance of enslaved Africans. Different branches of industry, such as the printing trade, profited not only from slavery but also from the alliances established with the slave-owning elite, as we will see in the case of the publisher Francisco de Paula Brito.

Far from being limited to a recounting the events of an individual's life, there is a vast historical biography on the world of printing. In this regard, Alistair McCleery, in an article on the publisher Allen Lane, defends the importance of the study of the publisher's individual agency to the his-

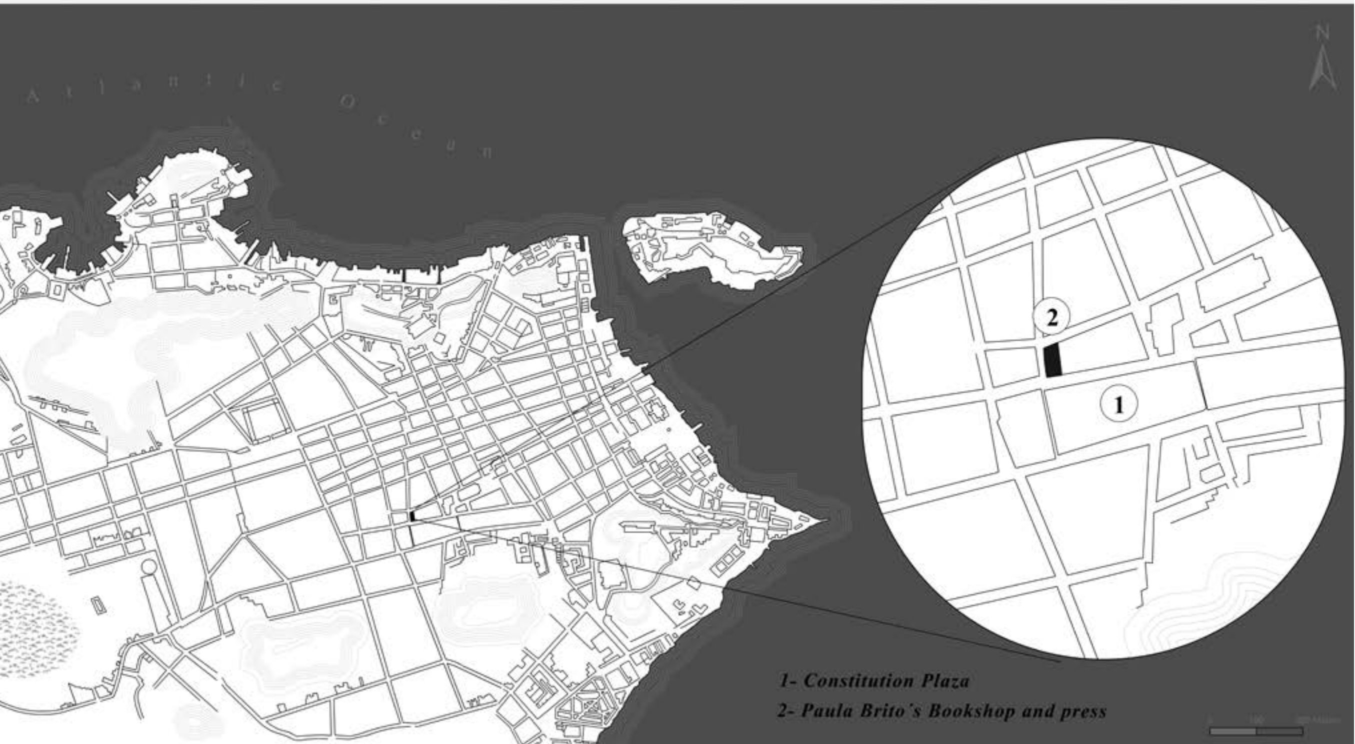

FIGURE 3. Rio de Janeiro, the Imperial Capital (1858)

tory of books, considering the application of theoretical concepts such as "the field" and "functional principles" formulated respectively by Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault, to be of little relevance for understanding the publishing market.[15] For the nineteenth century, prime examples of the fruitfulness of such studies include Jean-Yves Mollier's biographies of the Lévy brothers and Louis Hachette, as well as Ezra Greenspan's work on the life of New York publisher George Palmer Putnam.[16] It should be noted, however, that the biographies of publishers fall within a broader context, in which the biographical genre itself, long regarded as "impure," as observed by François Dosse, has been welcomed in the bastions of academia, especially in the last three decades, given the collapse of so-called totalizing paradigms. Since then, craft historians—such as the new British Marxists, the third generation of the *Annales*, and the Italian scholars of "microhistory"—have begun focusing on the experiences and aspirations of flesh-and-blood men and women. Going from individual-agency-centered studies to biography was a major step, and indeed it has been systematically problematized and practiced in the different domains of history, including the history of printing.[17]

Many of the historians who have written about the experiences of nineteenth-century publishers have been able to rely on complete sets of documents, such as the records of Blackwood studied by David Finkelstein at the National Library of Scotland. Considered one of the most complete archives left to us by a nineteenth-century British publishing house, these records enabled Finkelstein to engage in a detailed study of the activities of the company and its directors between 1860 and 1910.[18] In the case of Paula Brito, if similar records once existed, they must have been destroyed in the fire that razed the buildings surrounding the press run by the publisher's widow in the early hours of September 25, 1866. Although the printing workshop was only superficially damaged by the flames, the water the firefighters used to control the blaze damaged most of the late publisher's estate. Thus, writing a biography of Francisco de Paula Brito first required an effort to locate and gather sources. In addition to researching newspapers, initially at the Edgard Leuenroth Archive, and over the past two years using the National Digital Library, I have also studied manuscripts found in different archives and libraries mainly located in Rio de Janeiro.

The story of Francisco de Paula Brito, "the first publisher worthy of the name that we had among us," according to Machado de Assis, will be revisited in this book in four parts. The first, divided into six chapters, deals with

the publisher's formative years and activities during the Regency period (1831 to 1841). However, going back to the eighteenth century, we will also see how Paula Brito's family members gradually rid themselves of the bonds of slavery and established themselves as free—and what is more, literate—artisans in Rio de Janeiro. The fact of belonging to a family of freedpersons with a penchant for reading gave the young man access to literacy at a very young age, which made a significant contribution to his apprenticeship as a printer and the development of his taste for poetry. Given the possibilities that emerged after the abdication of Pedro I in 1831, the young Paula Brito decided to buy his cousin Silvino José de Almeida's bookshop, where he later installed a wooden printing press. By becoming a printer-bookseller, Paula Brito was exposing himself to the negative consequences of entering that business, from the threat of having his presses smashed by angry mobs to legal persecution during the Feijó Regency.

Divided into four chapters, the second part deals with the publisher's social ascension in the 1840s. Paula Brito's success as a seller of books, newspapers, and miscellaneous items was essential to the improvements he made in his printing shop. Consequently, that was when Paula Brito became a publisher. Driven by competition with French fictional narratives, the printer-bookseller made the original decision to finance the publication of a work by a Brazilian novelist, the young Teixeira e Sousa. This part of the book also deals with the alliances the publisher formed with Conservative politicians after the coup that declared the majority of Pedro II, well as the organization of labor in his world, both at the press and at home—a microcosm that included foreign workers, hired-out slave women, and free Africans.

After planning the establishment of a large-scale press to meet the needs of Rio de Janeiro's provincial government, Paula Brito founded the Dous de Dezembro company. The third part of this book is entirely devoted to the history of that firm, founded amid the reconversion of capital formerly employed in the transatlantic slave trade to businesses in Rio de Janeiro in the 1850s. The chapters in the fourth and final section deal with the reconstruction of the publisher's businesses after the company failed in 1857. Although he had to scale down his operations and deal with hordes of creditors, some factors enabled Paula Brito to continue printing newspapers and publishing Brazilian authors after his firm went bankrupt. These include the networks of social interactions and personal relationships the publisher-bookseller had formed, such as those established through the Petalogical Society. Furthermore, to expand on this question, part four also discusses

the vicissitudes of the book market in Rio de Janeiro, as well as Paula Brito's relations with his authors. At the time, all the raw materials used by printers in Rio de Janeiro were imported, from paper to printing ink, which inevitably affected the cost of books, magazines, and newspapers. There were also serious obstacles to their distribution in the other provinces of Imperial Brazil. Finally, we will see how Paula Brito's widow, Rufina, tried and failed to keep the family business going after his death.

PART ONE

The Ventures and Misadventures of a Free Printer

CHAPTER 1

A "Dove without Gall" and the Court of Public Opinion

Over the course of 1833, rumors of the possible return of Emperor Pedro I, who had left for Europe after his abdication on April 7, 1831, began reverberating through the streets of Rio de Janeiro. In 1832, a political faction had been formed in that city with the chief aim of calling for the return of the former ruler whose current title was the Duke of Bragança. They were called the Restorationists or Caramurus.[1] The other two factions active in the city at the time were the Exaltados (Impassioned ones), also known as the Farroupilhas (Ragamuffins), and the Moderates, or Chimangos.[2] As we will see, Moderates and Exaltados had joined forces in Campo da Honra (Field of Honor) plaza, staging the Seventh of April rebellion which forced Pedro to abdicate the throne in favor of his son, who was then a minor. However, as the Moderates gained power, the alliance between those two political identities fell apart.[3] As a result, broadly speaking, while the Caramurus wanted Pedro I to return, the Exaltados

were radical liberals who opposed the centralizing project of the Moderates who, in turn, were aligned with the aspirations of the large landowners and merchants of the provinces of Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, and São Paulo.[4]

Just when rumors of the former emperor's return reached a deafening pitch, the Moderates began instrumentalizing the byname Caramuru. At least, so said some newspapers and satirical publications like *O meia-cara*, which observed on November 11, 1833, that "the idea of imminent restoration has given free rein to the Chimangal gang to engage in all sorts of despotism."[5] *Evaristo* backed up that charge by reporting that "the name of Restorationist is given to all those who disagree with the dominant faction [the Moderates] and, through this means, indiscriminately insults honorable Citizens who, dragged off to horrible dungeons, have their hands tied."[6] Indeed, the situation truly began to worsen, both for the Restorationists and the supposed Restorationists, in early December 1833, especially in the evening of the second of that month, Pedro II's eighth birthday.

That night, the Military Society, which, according to the newspaper *A verdade*, "gathered in its bosom all individuals, whether or not they were in the military, who were disgruntled with the Government, and preferably the most brazen Restorationists,"[7] decided to display an illuminated mural that, instead of an effigy of the child-emperor, showed a general who bore a strong resemblance to Pedro I. Some reports state that a justice of the peace was called in, and that, after inspecting the inopportune tribute to the former emperor, he had had the image removed. However, some reports stated that the "indignant populace threw stones at the illumination and the mural, removed it, and stamped on that picture."[8] There were also disturbances at the Theater, where government supporters clashed with backers of José Bonifácio, Pedro II's guardian, whom the Moderates accused of being the Restorationist-in-Chief, allegedly orchestrating a thousand conspiracies from the imperial residence to bring about Pedro I's return.[9]

Three days later, in the afternoon of December 5, over a thousand people gathered outside the Military Society's headquarters in Largo de São Francisco de Paula. It was said that that organization, viewed as a bastion of Caramurus, would be holding an assembly that day. The furious crowd stoned the building and smashed the plaque bearing the society's name. A smaller group is said to have entered the building and ransacked it, tossing furniture and papers into the street. The crowd only left the scene when a justice of the peace appeared.[10] However, not satisfied with the destruction of the Military Society's headquarters, some of them headed for the

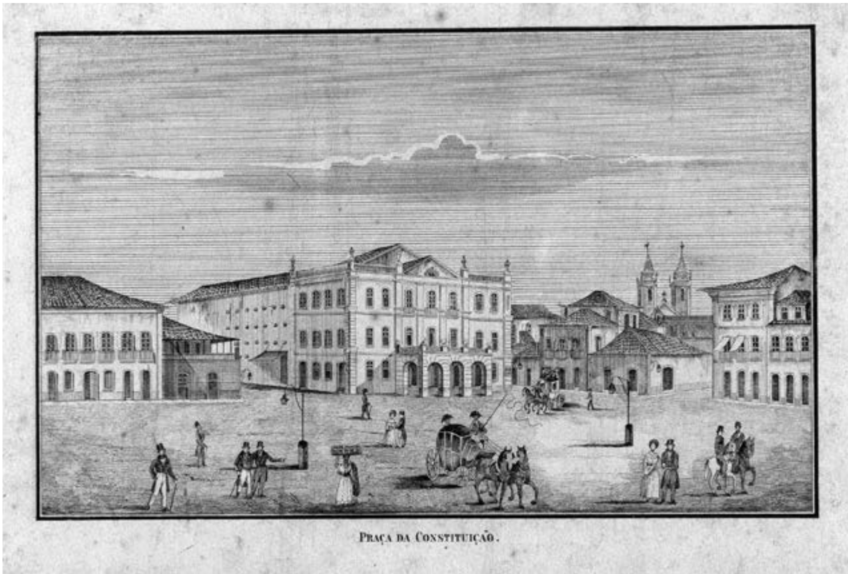

FIGURE 4. Praça da Constituição (Constitution Square)

printers' workshops that produced periodicals and pamphlets linked to the Restorationists.

Reports of the incident do not make it clear whether the group first attacked David da Fonseca Pinto's Paraguassú Press before going on to Nicolau Lobo Vianna's Diário Press (Tipografia do Diário), or if they split up and destroyed both workshops at once.[11] In any case, an account by Nicolau Lobo Vianna published a few days later in *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* gives a very clear idea of the afternoon's events:

> doors and windows [were] smashed in, and all the presses, furnishings, and other printing equipment were destroyed; all the printed matter, notices published and awaiting publication, was destroyed, everything scattered in the street, our establishment (through which with immense effort we eke out a living for our large family) was reduced to nothing, or a heap of rubble, and the losses we have suffered are considerable.[12]

The situation was probably very similar at David da Fonseca Pinto's establishment—presses and printed matter destroyed, type scattered in the street, everything reduced to "a heap of rubble." It so happens that the crowd's bloodlust, or rather lust for Caramuru presses and pamphlets, was

not sated by ransacking the Paraguassú and Diário. There was a third workshop to be demolished in Rio de Janeiro, and the horde—which it certainly was from the printers' perspective—headed for Praça da Constituição (Constitution Square).

At about seven p.m., a group "armed with sticks" arrived at Brito and Company's Fluminense Press (Tipografia Fluminense de Brito e Companhia). Shouting "Paula Brito restaurador" ("Paula Brito, restorationist"), they threatened to break in and give it the same treatment meted out to the other two presses. Francisco de Paula Brito must have been overcome with panic. After all, the results of two years of hard work were about to be destroyed. And they would have been, but for the intervention of the justice of the peace of Santíssimo Sacramento parish, José Inácio Coimbra, who ordered the crowd to disperse and assigned a National Guard patrol to guard the printer's door.[13]

The following day, still profoundly shaken, Paula Brito wrote and printed his *Proclamação aos compatriotas* (Proclamation to the compatriots), a one-page document in which he aimed to give a "sincere account" of his "political faith." In it, he refuted accusations that he belonged to the Restorationist faction, declaring himself to be a "true Exaltado." He was a "Brazilian who took up arms among you on the glorious 7 of April [of happy memory], and, enlisted in the national ranks, I protested, defending the Nation, Constitution and Nationality with my life." According to his Proclamation, the confusion had arisen from a "small pamphlet"—perhaps a Caramuru newspaper called *A mineira no Rio de Janeiro*, as we will see in Chapter 5—in which Paula Brito, proclaiming himself a "FREE PRINTER" in capital letters, stated that he belonged to "no party whatsoever."[14]

Meanwhile, the Moderate press celebrated the "lively conduct of the people of Rio de Janeiro on the second, fifth and sixth of December, in which they made the Restorationists disappear."[15] In its Notices section, *Sete d'Abril* mocked the ravaged printers' workshops, observing, for example, that "we really miss the *Escaped Slaves Daily:* now two have just escaped who are even captains. If anyone finds the two maroons, please have them delivered to their master, who is in Lisbon."[16] Ransacked on December 5, the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, a newspaper that mainly contained advertisements, including escaped slave announcements, was not published between December 6 and 11, and came out in a smaller format between the twelfth and seventeenth. Therefore, the joke can be interpreted as follows: the "escaped slaves" mentioned in *Sete d'Abril* must have been Nicolau Lobo Vianna and David da Fonseca Pinto, and their Lisbonite "master," Pedro I.

Francisco de Paula Brito did not escape the editor of *Sete d'Abril*'s caustic comments. On December 21, a note in that newspaper's Notices read as follows: "It is false that Mr. *Paula Brito* owes money and obligations to Ripanso and his Brother; it is also false that he is currently occupied with slandering and disparaging them."[17] The style of that section of the Moderate newspaper aimed to amuse its readers through sarcasm. Therefore, the editor meant to say the exact opposite: that Paula Brito did, in fact, owe money and favors to Ripanso and his brother, and had ungratefully slandered and disparaged them. Before learning who Ripanso was, let us take a look at another notice mocking Paula Brito, published in *Sete d'Abril* on January 1, 1834: "It is entirely false that the papers found on Rua da Ajuda, following the destruction of the Diário Press, included the originals of the most infamous notices published in the *Manteiga* signed by the *Patriot* Mr. Paula Brito. This gentleman is a dove without gall, and not a Restorationist at all."[18]

Once again, and through the same sarcasm, the reader was meant to understand the exact opposite. Far from being a "dove without gall," it meant that Paula Brito was as much a Restorationist as the "small amount of printed matter" that his workshop produced, and more than that, he was the author of the notices published in the *Manteiga* (Butter), as the *Diário do Rio de Janeiro* was called, which had been found amid the wreckage of Nicolau Lobo Vianna's press. The insult from *Sete d'Abril* left a deep impression; so much so that, two years later, Paula Brito referred to it in verses he published in *Mulher do Simplício* (Simplício's [the simpleton's] wife):

> And so that you know
> That I am speaking true,
> Just as a certain writer said,
> "I am a *dove without gall*."[19]

However, as early as January 1834, Paula Brito, who wrote that he was "already tired of hearing [what] is being said about me *after the events of December 5, 1833*," once again took up his pen and strips of paper and launched a broadside against the editor of *Sete d'Abril*. It was a lengthy reply that, when printed, took up seven of the eight pages of the January 21 edition of the *Carioca: Jornal político, amigo da liberdade e da lei* (Political newspaper, friend of liberty, and the law). Paulo Brito had printed that newspaper at the Fluminense Press since August of the previous year, which may explain why it was not hard to negotiate that many pages with the publication's editor.

The article had two objectives. First, Paula Brito wanted to make it clear to his readers that he did not owe any money at all to Ripanso and his brother and that he was not the author of the notices published in the *Diário*. Ripanso, as Paula Brito explained, was what "the newspapers of the former opposition" called the poet, journalist, politician, and bookseller Evaristo da Veiga. Thus, after refuting *Sete d'Abril*'s first accusation, he structured the remainder of the first part of the article around an account of his life story, from his childhood to the time of writing. However, although there are some elements of an autobiographical account, [20] the second objective of the article is more of a defense in which the printer, acting as his own advocate, sought to redeem himself before the court that had condemned him. In his words, Paula Brito wanted "to present my defense to the Court of Public Opinion, which it will judge as the supreme Jury." Acquittal by the Court of Public Opinion was essential, because despite his passion, reaffirmed in nearly every sentence of the article, Paula Brito did not hide his desire to restore his "credit." Although he wanted "the good of the Nation," he was not interested in "being anything more than a *printer*."

The events of December 5, 1833, indicate that public opinion, which was in full bloom in the city,[21] also ruled Rio de Janeiro's printing activities with an iron fist. The tension is interesting to see, because before or despite describing himself as a member of a political faction, Francisco de Paula Brito refused to give up the prerogatives of a "free printer." However, there is no doubt that the Restorationist pamphlet that caused him so much grief was unsigned, and Paula Brito tried in vain to exempt himself from responsibility for the content of the publications that came off his presses.

This situation led to two basic problems for nineteenth-century journalism in Brazil: the institutionalization of anonymity and, therefore, the question of attributing legal responsibility for anonymous publications. As we will see, the crowd that almost ransacked Paula Brito's press was acting very much like the judiciary and enforcers of the laws enacted and revised since the reign of King João VI to keep strict control of what was published, and consequently read, in this country. While authors were shielded by anonymity, the printers could be readily identified and, in effect, had to redeem themselves before official and unofficial tribunals, such as the court of public opinion. But looking into this matter more deeply, we should first learn how Francisco de Paula Brito, a young *pardo* (brown, mixed-race) man, the son and grandson of freed slaves, joined the ranks of those printers.

CHAPTER 2

Plantation Lad

In his article in *O carioca*, Paula Brito gave a very succinct account of his childhood: "A son of the City of Rio de Janeiro, but raised far away from the perils of [that city], I always lived in the bosom of my family, with parents of small means, until the age of thirteen." However, a little later, the printer associated the color of his skin with the causes of the dire events of December 5, 1833: "I am Brazilian, albeit a man of color, the main cause of the war against me; but it honors me just as much as those of a lighter color than mine glory in being white." Paula Brito concluded by stating: "I am speaking of my nation's business because the Constitution of my Country gives me that right."[1]

It is interesting to note how color and the Constitution intersected in the printer's narrative. Indeed, the Imperial Constitution, enacted in 1824, when Paula Brito was fifteen years old, did not discriminate between Brazilian citizens on the basis of skin color.[2] The way Paula Brito developed his argument a decade later demonstrates the political implications of the absence of a racial clause in the definition of Brazilian citizenship. Despite his *cor trigueira* (brown color), which so incensed his enemies, Paula Brito viewed himself as a full citizen with the backing of the Constitution. And he was not the only one to see himself that way.

Paula Brito belonged to a generation of educated men of color who were born free between the end of the eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth century, reaching political adulthood between the twilight of the First Reign and the dawn of the Regencies, standing out in politics and journalism, among other fields.[3] As we will see, the historical experience of these young citizens *de cor trigueira* was closely linked to the emergence of newspapers and satirical publications such as *O mulato, ou, O homem de cor* (The mulatto, or, The man of color), printed in Paula Brito's press in 1833. Among other demands, they advocated giving that significant segment of society access to public office. First, however, we must consider that the experience of full citizenship by men of color in the first decades of the Empire of Brazil was forged by the experience of freedom in Portuguese America. Because that movement was exemplified by Paula Brito and his family, we will take a look at it in this chapter.

The surname that Paula Brito adopted from his maternal grandfather came from the latter's father and former owner, Portuguese sergeant major Francisco Pereira de Brito,[4] who, together with his brothers Captain José Pereira de Brito and Second Lieutenant Julião Pereira de Brito, left Portugal in the 1720s, crossed the Atlantic and climbed the sierra to reach the mines of Serro do Frio, where it was said that gold and diamonds sprang from the ground.

Sergeant Major Francisco Pereira de Brito owned many slaves who were baptized in the village of Tapanhuacanga, which suggests that Paula Brito's great-grandfather settled there. Seven leagues from the Vila do Príncipe, it was the county seat of Serro do Frio, created as a result of the discovery of gold in those parts in 1714. That precious metal was the cause of the first exodus toward that area in the early eighteenth century. However, the mass immigration intensified in the 1720s, when diamonds were found in Arraial do Tejuco. By the time the governor officially notified King João V of the discovery of diamonds in 1729, the news had already spread like wildfire in Lisbon. Some even suspected that the governor had taken his time to write to the king, because it was said that he had benefited from clandestine mining. Thus, the Crown only extended its administrative, military, and tax apparatus to the extraction of the diamonds in that year.[5]

Between 1725 and 1737, certified church records—basically the baptism and death records found in the Ecclesiastical Archives of the Diocese of Diamantina, Minas Gerais—show that the Pereira de Brito brothers became the masters of most of the enslaved in the Vila do Príncipe area. Considering