

Brazilian culture and politics in the 1930s and the remembrances of Magalhães Barata, interventor of Pará

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Abstract

The article analyzes the political culture of the 1930s in Brazil from the point of view of the remembrances of Magalhães Barata, a military interventor who participated in various movements led by army lieutenants in the 1930s (1930 and in 1935). The article deals as well with the memories of political contemporaries of Barata, demonstrating how the political culture of this peripheral region related to the political events unfolding in the Brazilian national arena.

Keywords

political culture, strong state, lieutenants, memory, interventor

The news daily *Diário do Estado* of April 6, 1935 brought the headline: “MESSAGE presented to the state constitutional assembly by the esteemed Major Magalhães Barata, federal interventor in the state of Pará” and followed to describe the assessment of the political moment contained in this message concerning Brazil and the state of Pará in 1935. The interventor was undergoing a political crisis within the bloc that had led the 1930 Revolution in Pará and who together shared power and government. Major Magalhães Barata was appointed by the intervention committee and by its civilian and military allies in 1930. In 1935 this political bloc breaks down and there is the non-election of the interventor for the state’s constitutional government.

Major Magalhães Barata faced problems after the elections of October 1934 when he successfully secured a majority of 22 out of 31 state deputies through the Liberal Party (PL), organized by the 1930 winning bloc. The PL was conceived as a political base for the interventor and as a vehicle to compete in the 1934 elections, since the lieutenants were not able to form a nationwide party. In April 1935, the interventor was not able to obtain the indirect appointment to the governorship of the state of Pará thus triggering a political crisis, one leading to the end of the first intervention of Magalhães Barata in Pará.¹

When the still interventor resorts to the pages of the *Diário do Pará* to offer up an assessment of his political trajectory of Pará, aligning it with the *tenentista* movement, as well as a summing up of his time as interventor his words are also a testimony of the political culture of the time in its formative period and that already symbolized the political thought later consolidated by the *Estado Novo*. The purpose of this article is to analyze the remembrances of Magalhães Barata as an expression of a culture and a form of making politics, connected to a parcel of the 1930 tenants’ movement. Our goal is to analyze, from a perspective removed from the urban centers of the Center and South of the country, the ideas of a political culture that will be consolidated by the *Estado Novo*, and that are present in the clashes of 1935. We will basically build upon the remembrances of major Magalhães Barata, news pieces from the times and the remembrances of other 1930 revolutionaries in Pará. We have tried to contrast the

remembrances of the interventor with those of other figures involved in the events, although the focus remains on the remembrances of the interventor as they convey a certain interpretation of Brazil's history and dialogues with the political ideas of the early 1930s, especially with regard to the conception of the States, the role of the military, the lieutenants, political parties and the notions of nationality, revolution and democracy.

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Major Magalhães Barata studied at the Realengo military school, in Rio de Janeiro. He served as a second class lieutenant in the 47th battalion based in Pará. He also served in Rio de Janeiro and Rio Grande do Sul where he established connections with the *tenentista* movement, and engaged with Luís Carlos Prestes, Juarez Távora, Siqueira Campos, Landry Salles, Juaracy Magalhães and other luminaries of the moment. He participated in the military protests in 1922 and 1924 and was detained in Manaus² because of his participation in the 1924 movement. He then flees to Rio Grande do Sul. After receiving a pardon he returns to the army and arrives clandestinely to Belém to articulate the military uprising of 1930. He is arrested by the state police forces of governor Eurico Valle while hidden at the Hospital Juliano Moreira, a mental institution. He is taken in custody to Rio de Janeiro, from where he flees once again now towards Espírito Santo to articulate the 1930 uprising. When the uprising is victorious, despite its defeat in Pará³, he is appointed as interventor and promoted to major in 1931.

In order to understand the times from which the interventor's memories stem, it is necessary to analyze political crisis taking place in 1935 in the state of Pará. The 1934 constitutional assembly led to the interventionism system, put into place by Getúlio Vargas in 1930. In 1935 few military interventors had remained⁴. In Pará, interventor Magalhães Barata ran for state governor. The 1934 Constitution established that six months later, in April 1935, the deputies elected in 1934 would in a state assembly session, duly summoned by its president and board, elect the state governor and two senators by a simple majority vote. The Liberal party won by a comfortable margin in the 1934 elections in Pará, yet dissenters joined the *Frente Única Paraense* (FUP) in opposition to interventor Barata, headed by the owner of the *Folha do Norte*, the journalist Paulo Maranhão⁵ and did not vote for the interventor for governor.⁶ The FUP elected nine deputies, which, added to the seven dissenters, achieve a majority in the state assembly.

According to the deal struck between the dissenters and the *Frente Única Paraense* Mario Chermont⁷, a brother of Abel Chermont, president of the PL, would be elected as state governor. Abel would be elected senator and the remaining senate seat would be given to Aberlado Conduru.⁸ Why the about-face? The political conjuncture of April 1935 is the starting point to debate the power relationships established centered on the interventor. According to dissenters, Major Barata was to blame for the break as a result of his insistence that elected PL deputies relinquished their mandates in favor of his brother, Mario Barata.⁹ Gun fights, houses hit by stray bullets, deaths, kidnappings, street protests and killings became part of the political conjuncture that provoked a government crisis in Pará.¹⁰

Barata did not accept the fact that his brother was not elected and realized that there was a political maneuver within the PL to not elect him, as many ballots in several regions of the state had been tampered, with Mário Barata's name had been struck out and placed last.¹¹ We can notice that PL leaders such as Abel Chermont did not want the election of the interventor's brother, fearing that he would succeed his brother as governor since the 1934 Constitution prohibited reelections for presidents and governors. Abel Chermont also rejected the new political pact with the interventor. For him, the time of provisional

government had come to an end and he intended to do politics through the PL, with the interventor's tutelage.

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The PL indicated that it was divided and Barata's project of power had clashed with that of Abel and Mario Chermont. Even when defining the slates that would run in the elections for the federal Chamber of Deputies and the Legislative Assembly¹² the appointments were not consensual. According to Ernestino Souza¹³ there were two strands in the PL as of 1934, one pro-Abel and the other pro Barata. Those on the side of Abel opposed the rise of Barata's influence and criticized Aníbal Duarte, the son in law of Barata, for the creation of the popular concentration populares¹⁴, a group supporting the actions of the interventor. The *abelistas* were convinced by FUP deputies that the *baratistas* planned to take actions against them. The first of them would be to defeat the leader of the state coalition, Ernestino Souza Filho, a state deputy elected by the PL and a right-hand man of the PL's president, Abel Chermont. Another blow would be to elect Abel and Mario Chermont senators, who would then be replaced by deputies connected to Barata: Marioa Barata a Apio Medrado;¹⁵ also the candidacy of Pires Camargo¹⁶ for the presidency of the state assembly would be imposed.

The interventor elected the president of the Assembly, the leader of the coalition and the presidency of the state assembly, and split indications with Abel within the coalition. These incident led *abelistas* to believe that they would be sidelines by *baratistas*. In the elected coalition, Abel and Mario Chermont led the deputies, who broke with the PL and joined the opposition. A crisis ensued and president Getúlio Vargas was called upon to mediate negotiation and end the crisis. The president of the republic made the following statement in a journal entry dated April 4, 1935:

The fact that drew the most attention yesterday occurred in Pará. Figures who supported the interventor Barata, from the Chermont camp, joined the adversary group, forming the majority in the state assembly, in a bloc of 16 deputies. Barata, deeming himself betrayed, informed me of the fact, assuring that he would maintain order and would transmit power directly to his assistant; the opposition deputies taking refuge in the region's general quarters telegraphed me asking for guarantees and requested a *habeas corpus*. It as granted but in the meantime the allies of major Barata, 13 in all in addition to three sub-deputies, convened and elected him the governor of Pará, presently taking office and making the necessary communications. A duplicate government is in the workings.¹⁷

On April 5, Vargas offers another comment on the events:

The case of Pará has taken a violent turn, the deputies on the opposition, who number 16, protected by a *habeas corpus*, were on their way to the assembly, escorted by the federal guard, when they were ambushed by the interventor's guard" Fighting ensued, deaths, and wounds. Among those wounded were three federal deputies. There are too few now for a session and the deputies have returned to their exile at the region's military headquarters.

(...) I received the telegram from the Electoral Court's president, communicating its decision to intervene in the state of Pará, requesting me to name an interventor (...) I immediately decided to accept the court's request and sent for major Carneiro de Mendonça in order to invite him to be the interventor, and, before he arrived, I dictated the telegrams to the Ministry of Justice for major Barata and major Portela, the region's commander, communicating my decision. (...) I received major Carneiro de Mendonça, to whom I explained the situation and made the invitation

for the job. At first he was reluctant, but, considering my appeals to my great need of his services he accepted. The nomination decree was signed (...).¹⁸

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The reports from newspapers and the narratives of those involved greatly expand the number of commoners involved in the conflict. Dissident deputies were ambushed in the streets as they went to the session at the assembly and impeded from continuing, returned to the general headquarters, where they had been since April 5, fearing further assaults and kidnappings ordered by the interventor.¹⁹ On the same day, April 6, 1935, during the whole of the afternoon and the evening, several rallies and demonstrations in favor of Magalhães Barata were organized throughout the city of Belém.²⁰ Large numbers gathered in front of the residence of the major. He thanked the tribute and declared that he would “remain besides the people, with whom he had labored and suffered.”²¹

The message published in the *Diário do Estado* is an important document for the historical analysis of the 1930s in Pará. The “Message” signed by Barata today serves as a remembrance of his first interventionship and about the political moment in the country. A memory with a historical significance. The interventor takes on the function of presenting society with a narrative of the process unfolding and does so with the certainty of being able to intervene in the history of his own times. He uses the past in its present, and employs it as an instrument in the local political dispute. The act of remembering and publishing a narrative, with the immediate past as a stage, is very important for an analysis of the period. The time of constructed memory has an objective, immediate as well, of trying to convey his appointment as state government, accepted by the president of the Republic, Getúlio Vargas, who, in his understanding, is as much of a revolutionary as he is.

The events of 1935, in these testimonies, are a reference in terms of constructed memories. These memories are the object of memory and history²², the narratives that present the political games of warring power projects for the state of Pará. The major’s narrative and those of his contemporaries are pregnant with meaning.

As we analyze these constructed memories,²³ it is possible to see the outlines of a well-defined political culture²⁴ in dialogue with the political culture of the time and its practice and which offer a perspective of the conflicts that afflicted the country and which transformed the state of Pará into a theater where reconstitutionalization projects for the country encountered resistance.

The message of major Magalhães Barata begins with a thankful appreciation of the national army. He states that his character building and life itself are bound to the barracks, which “sheltered” him during his youth and where he received his military education. According to him, his character, discipline were forged by the army, where he “developed and consolidated his sentiment, of honesty, disregard for material goods, loyalty and candor”²⁵ The interventor presents himself as a participant of the military movements of the 1920s and 30s, as a lieutenant. He casts himself as a man of the Brazilian army and also as a man of politics. In his self-profile, he defines himself as the product of that “admirable filter of national dignity”, namely, the army.

As he construes his memories, Barata believes he has been betrayed. He portrays himself as disillusioned with politics, disgusted and at times led to return to his “quarters” depicted as an earnest place, ruled by patriotism and lack of self-interest. The civilian world is judged negatively. Major Barata affirmed that this mission as a revolutionary was to remain in this environment faithful to the revolution, love of the motherland and loyalty

to his principles. It was his duty to transform the political environment and his army training was his weapon and shield against bad politicians.

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We can gather that his vision of the unfolding historical process as a struggle between the military revolutionaries and the representatives of local oligarchs and their allies, who are the betrayers of the ideals of the 1930 Revolution. The memories of the interventor are actions that “refer to specific questions, related to the ideals and objectives that motivated the young officials in the 1920s and early 1930s, and the general questions related to the role of the armed forces, an particularly the army in Brazilian politics” (Pandolfi, 2007: 36).

According to Magalhães Barata three capital factors disturbed the development and the normal course of the Brazilian revolutionary cycle: the political current, the pacifying junta and the attempt to reenact a constitution. Barata admitted that the very short time lapse between the “process of the 1930 revolution”²⁶ and the time in which he speaks, 1935, do not favor a profound analysis of the this process, yet he is willing to do so tentatively in order to express his opinions of this ongoing process.

Magalhães Barata mentions the book published by Virgílio Santa Rosa (1933) and also the work of Oliveira Viana (1927: 46). In doing so he shows his knowledgeableness of the publications that discussed the *tenentista* movement, since the book by Santa Rosa was the first general take on the subject. In his memories, the major casts himself as the representative of the urban middle classes, in dialogue with Santa Rosa, for whom the lieutenants were the embodiment of the political revolution of 1930 led by this segment of the middle class.

It is today possible to reflect upon *tenentismo* as a movement and an ideology. Virgílio Santa Rosa in his work “A Desordem de 1932” and in “Os sentidos do tenentismo”, of 1933, rendered the term a sociological concept. The determination established by the social origins of the lieutenants lead Santa Rosa to conclude that this group was in fact the vanguard of the middle class at the time (Santa Rosa, 1976: 89).²⁷ This is an old debate in the historiography and there are other competing interpretations of *tenentismo*. Some evaluate the movement as part of the historical formation of the institution. The army, in particular, would be representative of a fraction of the military (Borges, 2000: 171). Boris Fausto analyzes them as the representatives of the army, which sustains a certain degree of autonomy relative to society. According to him, the lieutenants represented the army in their actions, justifications and the movement’s relationship with the army is the main focus of its ideology. This interpretation engages with works on the armed forces as a “founding structure of the military being” (Coelho, 1985: 19), a concern with the “recuperation of the institution of the military as a legitimate object of analysis” (Ibidem: 16). Another historiographical analysis is the one advanced by José Murilo de Carvalho, which underscores two orders of factors that strengthen the *sprit de corps*: the institutionalization of the army and the political action of the military (Carvalho, 1985:88). In his view, the lieutenants were the embodiment of the process of institutionalization of the army. The actions of the *tenentes* were analyzed as part of the constitution of military intervention. An intervention of contestation and then an intervention of control between 1930 and 1937. The lieutenants’ stance would serve as means to explain their political activism.

José Maria Bello states that “the military and civilians had distinct motivations, but they would occasionally converge” (Bello, 1964: 68). In these convergences military issues stand out in relation to their links to social sectors. The military upbringing always stands in relief (Bello, 1964: 67). Magalhães Barata touches upon this when he cites

his professional duty and social mission (Bello, 1964: 67). In the view of Forjaz “[he] is a democratic liberal, but there is an authoritarian inclination, he seeks popular support yet is incapable of organizing the people, he hopes to increase the representativeness of the States, yet remains elitist in his purview” (Forjaz, 1979: 353).

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The dialogue with Oliveira Vianna arises when the interventor states his agreement with the idea as to the need of a strong and authoritarian state, because of the “freedom” of Brazilian society. Barata defends the State as an instrument for the constitution of nationality, given the state of dispersion and weakening of the Brazilian people. In this sense, Barata is an adept to the positions championed by Oliveira Vianna. We know that the ideas of this thinker were enormously influential and widespread. The memories of the interventor are demonstrative of their influence, especially with regard to the type of instrumental authoritarianism, in which institutions of the authoritarian state are conceived as “means” or instruments for the realization of certain ends, being therefore transitory (Viana, 1933: 77). These ideas were part of the political atmosphere of the early 1930s, coinciding with the years in which the provisional government was being disputed, when the lieutenants of the 1920s start losing positions in the government.

During this period there were different strands of authoritarian thought, among them one that argued that an authoritarian political system was solely a stepping stone before becoming a liberal society. It consisted of a reaction to the political, social and economic challenges being encountered after the 1930 Revolution. The basis of the explanation for the inefficacy of the liberal political system in the liberal republic of Brazil is explained by Oliveira Viana as the result of the non-existence of liberal society. In order to create a nation and the conditions for a liberal society a centralized, authoritarian and strong state is needed. According to Oliveira Viana there were two Brazils, the “legal country” and the “real country” (Viana, 1933: 8). Viana used this conceptual tool more than anyone to delineate a diagnosis of Brazil.

One can find in the memories of the interventor defenses of positions that could be described as fascist²⁸ nationalist and authoritarian. The authoritarianism defended by Barata is shaped by the positions of Oliveira Viana with respect to instrumental authoritarianism. Barata defends the employment of instruments such as resistance clubs²⁹ as necessary organizations for the defense of authoritarian policies and also the constitution of civilian parties and organizations in support of the 1930 Revolution. In his view, the big revolution was yet to come. The interventor defended a prolonged period of dictatorship, “that would provide us with the factor time,”³⁰ a necessity in order to fully carry out the revolution. In this sense, the political thought of Barata seeks support in the arguments of Oliveira Viana to defend the 1930 Revolution and the participation of the lieutenants.

For the interventor, the military are the only ones safe from perdition and among them, the revolutionaries, because of their special training and the experience and knowledge acquired in military and political campaigns, such as the marches of the Miguel Costa and Luis Carlos Prestes lines, provided them with the knowledge to govern. For him, the reconstitutionalization process occurred too soon, guided by naive liberalism. The spirit of a new Brazil remained inchoate, but as a military, he pledges obedience to the law, as a former mission soldier.

The democracy he defend, and in whose name he is willing to taken on arms, is a democracy led by revolutionary military to implemented a strong and centralized state. The State is conceived as the brain of the nation that regulates and controls the actions

of each body of government (Viana, 1927:55). The interventor feels responsible for the disadvantages classes of society and wants to represent them. There is a defense of workers and their rights. In the view of the interventor, workers are supposed to have a more dignified life, but at the same time he believed the Brazilian people was incapable of governing, or, better yet, building a nation, with a revolutionary military government at the helm. Authoritarian regimes and strong states were considered the solution for the crisis of the liberal state and the 1934 Constitution

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In this article we analyze and discuss how these debates unfolded in the state of Pará and how local disputes engaged with the national and international political moment and how the inflections occurred in the 1930s in the state of Pará, although a marginal state in the national political scenario, dialogued with them. The analysis of the local conjuncture makes it possible to further understand political relationships and how local power – characterized as relational power³¹ – was disputed even with the legal benchmarks defined by the 1935 constitutional assembly which already upon promulgation was contested by the interventors and by president Getúlio Vargas, but nevertheless was obeyed due to the political conjuncture.

In the 1930s, it seemed that a political struggle had taken to arms, another trait of politics during the first republican period, that of armed movements³². The disputes over local power, for the apparatus of the State, transformed the 1935 elections in Pará into a political struggle.

In the remembrances of the interventor, the struggles in the state of Pará are mentioned as part of the nationwide uprisings of a military group, the lieutenants. In his remembrances the revolution is on the political agenda. Defending the revolution is a credential in the political debate and in the relationship with the federal government. It is a criterion in the definition of PL candidates and in pledges of loyalty of president Vargas. It is a trait of a political culture at bouts with the liberal state, in Brazil and in the world. The revolution was the main debated issue and the models of the state are the basis for political action in several social sectors. In Pará, these clashes served as arguments to explain the local conjuncture and to justify political practices of social groups vying for control of the State.

Major Barata defended the intervention of the military in political affairs, as a reaction to the republican anarchy that overwhelmed Brazil. Another element of the political culture of this decade is the call for a greater role for the military in Brazilian society. He refers to the *civilista* movement³³, establishing the relationship with the military who participated in this movement along with the military in the movements of 1922 and 1930. The major affirms the influence of the 1930 Brazilian Revolution on political parties, which, had deviated, so to speak, from its true course. He also ponders that the 1922 Movement, thus named, the republican reaction an 1930 liberal alliance, accelerated the development of an idea of revolution. Also according to the interventor's view, there was a shift, especially after 1932, with the enactment of the electoral code responsible for all but neutralizing the conquests of the revolution. In his narrative, the military, above corporations and parties, even above army's spirit of class, which was already consolidated, and put Brazilian national interest ahead of their own.³⁴ Major Magalhães Barata cites Luiz Carlos Prestes as an example of this attitude and reflects on the fact that the 1930 revolutionaries refused to join Prestes and reaffirms the profound connections to Brazilian reality, and for its sake justifies the condemnation of Prestes's option "for the

doctrines of that sterile system, the historical materialism of Marx³⁵, which according to him were “antithetic to the dispositions and traditions of our country”³⁶. In his view, the 1930 Revolution should have been about the broad issues involving the world as a whole, within an enlightened nationalist perspective, from a perch above party politics and class interests. This was, in synthesis, the thought of the military revolutionaries of the 1920 that carried out the 1930 Revolution, according to Magalhães Barata.

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The interventor works within a historical culture that traces a realm in which nationality can be represented, that prioritizes the “past” as key (Gomes, 2007: 54). In the interventor’s narrative it is possible to notice a particular reading of the past, in which the interventor sides with the nationalists and excludes Luís Carlos Prestes from this group. The concept of historical culture can apply to the remembrances of the interventor, insofar as it makes it possible to characterize the “the relationship of society with its past” (Gomes, 2007: 65). The reading of a past that mystifies the intentions of the lieutenants before the federal government and legitimizes them as truly capable of understanding national reality, united to draft a blueprint for the country and build a nation.

As he travelled through the national territory from one outpost to another, across towns and backlands, the capitals and urban agglomerations; in the far north and far South, from the coast to the frontier, through the interior and river banks, listening to the poor peasants and landowners and sugar plantation barons, the military, as few others, according to Magalhães Barata, knew Brazilian reality, the state of destitution of its population, the poverty of the hinterlands, the misery of country folks, the character of the backland’s people.

Given this situation, according to the remembrances of the interventor, the revolutionary military, dreaming and longing for better days for the people, fostering nationalism, using its fundamental qualities of goodness, intelligence, bravery and delicateness, promoted the 1930 revolution, which emerged victorious because “there was discontent in society, a profound psychological anarchy, a repugnant aversion to the politicking that led to the victory of October”. The political struggle of these times led the military lieutenants and their allies to organize, form allegiances and battle in the streets for leadership of a historical process bringing change. Change in the form of intervention in states, establishing a new conjuncture, encompassing parties as well with the formation of new regional and state parties in 1933.

The interventions established in 1930 ended with all old parties and the revolutionaries of 1930 never created new parties. Barata made it clear that the military should concentrate on politics, being active beyond the barracks or being political about military and army affairs in governments. Laws, rules and institutions are generally despised. Revolutions, a strong state, militaries at the helm are part of this political culture; as are a depreciation of political parties, the people and their capacity to lead the country. These views are put to the test in the 1935 elections in the state of Pará. One can see the contours of a political culture in the makings, interacting with local political disputes, where several groups vie for control of the State apparatus in order to establish a footing and implement its practices.

Barata, the interventor, offered up his personal assessment of the 1934 Constitutional Assembly in April of 1935. He states that the 1934 constitution founded upon the misconceptions of liberalism. He tries to remind all that he still incorporates the ideals of the 1930 movement and that his opponents are indeed traitors of the 1930 Revolution. Barata admits that the revolutionaries of 1930:

did not have a clear-cut agenda, given their revolutionary impetus and the explosive spirit proper to revolutions. In the shadow of the perils that loomed over us and today still do, two targets guided the steps of the 1930 revolutionaries: the politicking that involved the public administration and the extremist ideas that clouded Brazilian skies.

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For the interventor, the pacifying *junta* was one of the elements that undermined the politics of the revolutionary military, by making concessions to the oligarch politicians. For him, the *junta* could be seen as “the fruit of the morbid sentiment of our people, of the our accommodating indolence that tends to deflect sacrifice and the delay of sufferance.”³⁷ The *junta* supposedly honored the traditions of our liberalism, circumventing the necessary evil, however led to the more evil malady of uniting disgruntled military men, apt to architect revolt against the new order. For the interventor, the pacifying *junta* caused not a few maladies. Among them, the thwarting of the ordinary course of a revolutionary crisis, and incremented and facilitated the war in São Paulo, reviving the secessionist war bringing about unexpected compromises for the revolution.

Furthermore, Magalhães Barata, criticizes the electoral alliances made by the revolutionary military with politicians of the local oligarchies for the 1934 local elections “whose predominance should be avoided in order to stave off the so-called façade works.”³⁸ According to the Major, the Revolution had been an utter failure. In his view, there had not been enough time to change the country’s mentality, that required change in terms of the habits of people, coordinated and guided by the military, who were those most prepared to command nation-building and who were not involved in the local disputes of local oligarchies that would lead the country into social anarchy and institutional corruption, in his opinion. Here, again, it is possible to notice his agreement with the thought of Oliveira Viana, in terms of the characterization of the Brazilian people and the lack of organicity of civil society (Viana, 1933: 53).

Major Magalhães Barata makes an assessment of all his actions during his time at the head of the state government, from 1930 to 1935, stating that the revolution in Pará left deep imprints. He cites Plínio Salgado, justifying that the “pontific of Brazilian *integralismo*”³⁹ establishes a certain profile of the people, which he agrees with. To be sure, according to this profile, the Brazilian people is egotistical and is bent upon solving its problems in isolation and adventurously. What is more, the Brazilian people is submissive to whichever power is closest and with it establish a utilitarian relationship, and thereby remains lazy, serving only men and never general ideas, given his unilateral vision problems and morbid sentimentality. He is also undisciplined, futile, dishonest, incapable of collective thinking and untrustworthy inclined to “backdoor maneuvering”. According to Magalhães Barata, the solution presented by Plínio Salgado is agreement with his thought, meaning that the intellectual and moral ranks had to be mobilized in order to promote the unity of national thought. Magalhães Barata thus defends that the formation of the Brazilian people did not take into consideration the construction of national thought. There was the need to do so and this in 1935 dictatorship had to be prolonged, as a step towards the establishment of a new mentality.

At this point of the message, major Magalhães Barata starts to account for his acts during the first intervention in the state of Pará. He begins reaffirming that the revolution left deep scars, alongside the clamor of its victims who initially thought the revolution would satisfy their personal interests as long as they joined the ranks of the revolution, arms in hand, or at least pretending to do so. He construes a narrative showing that now all those

who took up arms in 1922, 1924 or 1930 were true revolutionaries. Some were men lacking any idealism, driven by confused discontent or unnamed motivations. Magalhães Barata traces a profile of his opponents, former allies during the 1930 Revolution who are no longer on his side by 1935. His aim is to disqualify them in the eyes of public opinion, the central government and before history.

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In his message, Magalhães Barata reaffirms that all the problems the 1930 Revolution set out to solve in Pará were duly faced. He presents the building of school throughout the interior, medical units, communication lines, the rebuilding of the railway connecting Belém to Bragança, the construction of radio communications, price control, the creation of a navigation service, the extinction of political clientele (*coronelismo*) and the overhauling of the administration. Barata believes that what he defines as the strong State was the necessary remedy for the troubles of the historical period and to be in agreement with the modern world. The State he defends is one needed for times of transition. Magalhães Barata has a very particular notion of how justice should be carried out, either against or in accordance to law. He argues that “my injustices occurred”⁴⁰ and that in doing so he did not realize democracy in theory but rather in practice. He classifies his government as “the people in government,” defined as a set of men organized in public administrative organisms. This people-government took care of the people-as-citizens. At this point, the interventor projects his comprehension of the organization of civil society, the corporations that should be represented in the state, once again echoing Oliveira Vianna (Viana, 1933: 55).

When the first electoral campaign for assembly members as himself comes around, Barata, as a revolutionary, believed it was his duty to rally together his fellow revolutionaries around certain principles and guidelines. At his point the interventors narrative admits that he engaged in political party politics and followed the directives of the October 3 club and the Góes Monteiro Doctrine (Pandolfi, 2007: 30), stating that the military ought to engage in politics and dispute elections with platform defending the ideal of the 1930 Revolution. He admitted that he was appointed by friend to govern the state, a constitutional government. He states that despite his convictions as to the need of dictatorial government, despite the distance from the government programs of the 1930 Revolution and the lack of administrative direction, he accepted the challenge. It was not a decision taken in unison with the lieutenants, many of who split with the provisional government and did not participate in the 1934 campaign. The political remembrances of the interventor can be analyzed as an attempt to build a political culture, assuming a certain interpretation of the past and of the 1930 Revolution that does not take on the same meaning as the one conferred to it by the “lieutenants”. What is more, historian Vavy Pacheco draws attention to the fact that the term *tenentismo* was constructed in the 1930 by the lieutenants in order to confer the movement initiated by military officials in the 1920s a positive sense and sheen of officiality with objectives and interpretations of the Brazilian past (Borges, 1992:78).

In his message to the people of Pará, the major celebrates the fact that the constitutional assembly members of 1934 catapulted Getúlio Vargas to the office of president of the Republic, a man who he describes as chosen as if by divine providence, appointed to conduct the country in a moment of turmoil at home and internationally, being capable of serenely averting Brazil from a nebulous future. Here, again, Magalhães Barata cites Luís Carlos Prestes and his influence on the armed classes as a threat to political stability in Brazil. A danger Vargas coped with by enacted labor legislation that dampened radical extremism.

Barata portrays the great leader as a conductor of the masses safeguarding victory over the oligarchies and establishing order in society after the failure of the liberal republic.

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Magalhães Barata construes the argument that the candidacies of the interventor was widely attacked by the antirevolutionary currents with the support of disgruntled revolutionaries. The major states that the 1932 movement was a mutiny that occurred in the state of Pará, between September 6 and 7, 1932, in adhesion to the movement in São Paulo, organized by students. The civil guard and communist activists. The uprising was controlled in less than twelve hours with the aid of factory workers, laborers and other common people. The interventor claims that the students were turned against him. The major says that since after the “São Paulo struggles” they were trying to personally eliminate him. He declares he never took measures, never procured vengeance. He let inquiries be forgotten in drawers. On the same day he ordered the release of all students only two remained detained, as they were still threats to public orders⁴¹.

At this moment the major is trying to become more visible in the eyes of the federal government, as a man capable of appeasing, forgiving and not exacting revenge against enemies, including those who took arms to oust him. He also wants to recall that he was always prepared when the 1930 Revolution called upon him, and also defended it in 1932. Yet he reminds all that Pará was indeed one of the places where the 1932 movement broke into armed clashes, including the naval battle at Itacoatiara, where 40 men perished. As one realizes, the interventor selects what to narrate and how to narrate thus casting silence over other events in 1932, especially in Óbidos and other municipalities of the state of Pará dominated by the rebels of the Constitutionalist movement (Pinto, 2012: 106).

Major Magalhães Barata recalls that in 1932 the state of Pará was the stage of several clashes and agitations, but in all instances the government was ready to act. The major cite the strike organized by commerce against the hospital tax, and also recalls of the participation of communists in this movement, being that the government was at once energetic and tolerant. His adversaries did not accept to enter electoral campaigns until October 22, 1934 after a burst of partisan violence that led to assassination of one of the movement's main leaders in broad daylight. A “poor family man, a loyal and dignified man was shot down: José Avelino da Silva⁴², who was murdered at a shop after an argument between sympathizers of the liberal party and the *Frente Única Paraense* broke out. Avelino was assassinated insides the Central pastry shop during an altercation with Dr. Agostinho Monteiro, the leader of the *Frente Única Paraense*. The identity of the shooter remains unknown to this day and the ensuing police investigation was fruitless. According to the remembrances of the interventor, there was a popular upheaval against one of the main perpetrators of the crimes in their opinion, the *Folha do Norte* newspaper: “A group of friends of the deceased man volleyed rounds against the newspaper in the wee hours of the 23rd, and were repelled by the *Folha*.”⁴³

As he organized his narrative, the interventor had the liberty to create, select, omit and expand. One cannot expect he would admit to any involvement in the attacks against the *Folha do Norte*, or in any armed action during the electoral process of April 1935. The fact is that these remembrances are dated two days after the events of April 1935 and they certainly set out to present a version of the facts and garner political support.

Despite producing a deeply partial document, this narrative is relevant when analyzed in comparison with other documents pertaining to the same process. Understanding how the narration operates selections and omissions reveals the conflicts surrounding the

events. There is a link between lived experience and the present moment of the narrative. There is a dialogue between the narrative and the historical moment in which it is produced. The gaps, omissions and forgotten facts created in the remembrances indicate the meanings contained in the narrative. This critical operation applied to the control of the remembrance for the construction of the 1930s in Pará in the interventor's narrative is a document extracted directly "from the present", the days of clashes in the April 1935, an authentic discourse produced at the origin of events. The remembrances of Magalhães Barata are intertwined with the political culture that permeated sectors of Brazilian and Pará society, which defended the idea of less centralized state, critical of partisanship and the 1934 Constitution.

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As he construes his remembrances, the interventor places himself in the political debate of his times. His report of the events conveys the fragility of the party system, the judicial system, of the Brazilian democracy itself. Several criticisms directed at the 1934 Constitution and the local oligarchies were used as arguments to back the 1937 coup, and were already present in April 1935 in Pará. The interventor's narrative expresses his positions against the totalitarian ideals and presents the dialogues established with the thinkers of the time.

The interventor is not the only one to offer up remembrances of April 1935. On April 10, Abel Chermont publishes a manifesto under the title "To the people of Pará and my fellow Liberal Party colleagues,"⁴⁴ in which he says he has a clear conscience, for he was no traitor or coward. He had already been betrayed and had taken precautionary measures against being stabbed in the back. He was not the traitor, but rather the victim, since major Barata wanted to replace him. In his view, Barata was capable of perpetrating this betrayal, as he had ordered the kidnapping of innocent workers from the *pedreira* neighborhood (Rocque, 1999: 56). Abel Chermont considered the major a criminal, capable of committing monstrous crimes. He accuses Barata of wanting to destroy the Liberal Party by creating Magalhães Barata "concentration centers". He accuses Barata of provoking all his past enemies, excluding them and insulted them in public, calling them thieves and bandits. In the eyes of Chermont, the major was the exterminator of the Liberal Party, whereas he was its salvation. For him the Liberal Party was the October Revolution in Pará, and not solely the major. He was defended the state of Pará, preventing it from falling into the hands of a small handful of people. He also accuses the group surrounding Magalhães Barata of sowing terror and mayhem in Pará society (Rocque, 1999: 363).

In Chermont's communication it is possible to notice that one of the crucial question was who would control the Liberal Party, which then was gaining political power in the local scenario. Abel felt threatened and realized that even though he was one of the 1930 revolutionaries in Pará, he was did not have the sympathy of the interventor and did not foresee a political future for himself and his brother in the Liberal Party if he remained controlled by the interventor. Chermont does not position himself against the 1930 Revolution and its ideals. He accuses the interventor of trying to consolidate a highly personalized and violent local power. He also plays the role of a 1930 revolutionary. The bloody disputes against the interventor were waged to defend the Liberal Party, in his view a symbol of the 1930 Revolution.

On April 12 the new interventor, Carneiro Mendonça, takes office. On April 16 Magalhães Barata publishes in the *Diário do Pará* a notice titled "My Attitude" in which he expresses

his opinion that the intervention in the state of Pará was unfair, precipitated and illegal. He says he was never in agreement with the choice of new governor for the state, being that he had been previously legally elected and sworn in as governor of the state of Pará and that the 1930 Revolution promised to respect the popular vote, being that he had been elected on October 14, 1935.

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On April, Vargas sends Barata a telegraph responding a telegram from the interventor, stating that Barata can count on his trust and esteem, acknowledging him for his valuable service and his dedication to public interest (Peixoto, 1995: 56). He understood Barata's situation, but pondered that the decision created *de facto* and *de jure* a new situation and he would have to act accordingly. On April 28, the Constitutional Assembly convened to elect the governor and two senators. The 16 dissident representatives were granted a *habeas corpus* by the electoral justice. They remained at a military headquarter and were escorted away to the mayoral palace. Except for the dissidents, no Liberal Party deputy was present at the session presided by Ernestino Sousa Filho, in the absence of Ápio Medrado, the previously elected president. Abel Chermont and Abelardo Condurú were elected for the senate and José da Gama Malcher, a third name suggested by Vargas, was elected governor.

We have seen the attempt in the narrative of Magalhães Barata to disseminate norms and values to be learned by society as characteristic of a national identity that the revolutionaries, a fraction of the lieutenants, wanted to fixate. Thus there is an interpretation and upholding of the past, that together form an historical culture, as in Le Goff's definition (1990: 56), to characterize the relationship of a society and its past.

The major understood that his past included the collective experience of those who emerged victorious from 1930, and for him the mission of the lieutenants was to assure this would become the widespread interpretation of the past for Brazilian society. This makes it possible to understand his stance towards the challenges of provisional government. His interpretation of the past justified the present and the place destined to the victors of 1930, the lieutenants. This victory assured their value in the 1930s thereby legitimating their right to govern.

The concept of political culture was used because it allows for an explanation of the political behavior of social, individual and collective actors, highlighting their points of view, perceptions, experiences and sensibilities. In this sense, major Barata expressed "a system of representations, complex and heterogeneous" (Gomes, 2007: 87).

Barata indeed planned his permanence in power and did want a new constitution in 1934 as it would undermine his intent to remain in power as it would forbid reelection. Barata devised his permanence in power when he inaugurated a new way of governing, marked by frequent visits into the interior, his public hearings with the people of Belém, his reduction of house rents, his appropriation of the land owned by the Lobos and Guimarães families and when he created the resistance clubs and the popular concentrations. Lastly in the conjuncture of 1934 and 1935 he noticed that it was necessary to control the PL, given the conjuncture that restored parties as important institutions in the political game. Former allies did not accept this new pact and broke allegiance to Barata.

To be sure, the constitution of a political culture demands time and does not exclude the dynamics of its interior. There are therefore other resistant cultures in dispute. It seems that the disagreements in Pará in 1935 reflect the resistances found within the governing

bloc with regard to the propositions for the future of the country. An example of this is father Leandro's split from Barata since he was opposed to reelections after 1934. Other ruptures occurred with Abelardo Conduru, since he did not declare his support of Barata's candidacy for government, and with Mario and Abel Chermont, due to their opposition to the concentrations created by Magalhães Barata, which would undermine the party and transfer control over to the so-called concentrations.

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There were clashes among several political cultures, including the liberal resistance to the centralized state, a project that did not succeed in the 1934 Constitution and that at the time faced head on the pretensions of Barata who employed violence and popular mobilizations to secure the maintenance of a lieutenant as governor of the state. There were therefore warring political cultures within the winning political bloc of 1930.

As he reckoned with his summing up, major Barata attempts an interpretation of the past which pits the "1930 revolutionaries" against the "traitors of the ideals of 1930". This vision legitimizes the group that carried out the Revolution in 1930 and identifies them with the ideas of the lieutenants. A heroic historical past which associates the enemies with the old oligarchies and the former allies as traitors. In fact, the process of construction of a political culture during the *Estado Novo* was germinated between 1930 and 1935. It is possible to say that a political culture was being constructed based on the behavior of political and social actors expressing their points of view in electoral disputes in 1934 and 1935. In April 1935, in Pará at stake were different projects for the country. A group of civilians who had participated of the 1930 revolution split from the interventor because they did not accept the terms of the new political pact, in the terms described above.

These ruptures caused the 1930 bloc in Pará to crumble. There was competition, collision and later a new political cultural became dominant in the *Estado Novo* period, which solidified several political conceptions expressed by the interventor. In order to complete this political culture a reading of the past was necessary, one in which the 1930 revolutionaries, the military and the lieutenants are cast as the agents of transformation and change. A heroic past which distances the heroes from the oligarchies, the political parties, liberalism and the 1934 constitution. An interpretation of the past that separates the republican past into the *República Velha* and the *Estado Novo*. These interpretations form a script, a narrative that the interventor employs in his remembrances. He defines in his narrative a history that is in dialogue with a political culture that became consolidated after the *Estado Novo*. This new narrative is consolidated by the Vargas government after 1937, supported by a new History curriculum and through institutions created with this intent, establishing links with the intellectual classes of the time. Here we have made an effort to show that a fair amount of these interpretations, especially regarding the First Republic and the role of the military and the 1930 Revolution, precede the *Estado Novo* and can be found in the remembrances of interventor Magalhães Barata.

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Notes

1. Interventors were federally appointed officers who took over the governance of some states and cities whose governors and mayors were not obeying the wishes of the Federal Government conducted by Getúlio Vargas. Magalhães Barata is reinstated as the interventor in the state of Pará in 1942 remaining until 1945 as a result of the war effort in the Amazon region.
2. See FERREIRA, Marieta; PINTO, Sumara. *A crise dos anos 1920 e a revolução de 30*. In: Ferreira, Jorge (org.) *O Brasil republicano: o tempo do liberalismo excludente*. Volume 1. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2011.
3. Eurico Valle was governor of Pará in 1930. His government defeated the movement's uprising in the state. He dismantled the actions planned by Barata, had him arrested and deported to Rio de Janeiro. In January 1931, Eurico Vale was arrested and his assets were sequestered.
4. The lieutenants were hegemonic in the appointment of the interventionships, but there was a total of seven interventors. See Pandolfi, Dulce. *Os anos 30: as incertezas do regime*. In: Ferreira, Jorge; Delgado, Lucília de Almeida. *O Brasil republicano*, vol.2. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2007.
5. João Paulo de Albuquerque Maranhão, one of the most prominent journalists in Pará, fought against the oligarchy of Antônio Lemos, the appointed mayor of Belém for 15 years, and governor Augusto Montenegro. A historical ally of Lauro Sodré, his newspaper was closed several times, and was the target of assaults and bullet shots by supporters of Antônio Lemos and Magalhães Barata and was kept from returning to Pará during Barata's interventionship.
6. The dissident PL deputies were: Ernestino Souza Filho, Djalma Machado, Aristides Reis e Silva, João Ferreira Sá, Franco Martyres, Alberto Barreiros and Raimundo Camarão.
7. A lawyer and the president of the Liberal party. He participated in the military uprising of 1930 in Pará and presided over the military inquiries involving sergeants and tenants in 1932 in Pará. He hailed from one of the oligarchic families of the state.
8. Aberlado Condurú was a lawyer and participated in the 1930 uprising and the interventionship of Magalhães Barata, and assumed the post of mayor's secretary – he breaks with 1934 because of his opposition to

reelection. See: SIMÕES, Denise. *Pará/1935: um estudo sobre liderança e conflito*. Rio de Janeiro, 1979.

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9. The interventor's brother, one of the creators of the Magalhães Barata concentration and the first vice-deputy elected to the federal legislative in 1934.

10. The 1934 elections in Pará was one of the most violent, as were the events in its wake. Elected deputy of the PL, was kidnapped and days later is found head shaved as a symbol of pressure for his resignation.

11. The election was through a voting list system with parties, but electors could scratch and form other lists ou change the order of the names on the ballot. Mario Barata and Julio Costa were scratched and assigned to the last places on the PL list. Barata was informed this action was conducted by Abel Chermont..

12. In order to compose the list for the elections, the criteria were: to have participated in the 1930 uprising, a Young male and a good speaker.

13. State representative for the PL in 1934, trusted by Abel Chermont.

14. The Magalhães Barata political concentrations were created by Anibal Duarte, his son-in-law. They served as auxiliary forces for the interventor. Extensions were created throughout Belém and in March of 1935 had a personal guard 300 youths strong for the interventor's personal security..

15. A member of the Liberal Party and a trusted friend of Magalhães Barata, elected senator in the state assembly session later annulled in April 1935

16. 1A member of the Liberal Party and a trusted friend of Magalhães Barata, elected senator in the state assembly session later annulled in April 1935.

17. *Diário de Getúlio Vargas*. Apresentação de Celina Vargas do Amaral Peixoto. Rio de Janeiro: FGV, Siciliano, 1995, p.374.

18. See PEIXOTO, Celina Vargas do Amaral (Apres); SOARES, Leda (Edição). *Getúlio Vargas: Diários*. São Paulo: Siciliano, 1995, p 376.

19. Many recall that the kidnapping of federal representative Genaro Ponte de Carvalho, the various assaults against the Folha do Norte newspaper and the assassination of state deputy candidate Avelino Silva. A history of violence justified fears.

21. The interventor could count on broad popular support on many issues including urban renovations h began as mayor. The major granted entitlement and distributed lots in several neighborhoods of Belém, after removing land ownership from tradicional Portuguese families who had been owners for many decades and charged rente for the occupation of poor families. Other actions by Barata were: decreeing a reduction of rente in 30% and creating hearings for the poor and providing basic staple foods and school uniforms.

22. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará newspaper. The Diário do Pará was the oficial mouthpiece of the government..

23. The concept of memory employed is based on the idea memory is constructed, selectively at different points of time. See POLLACK, Michael. *Memória e Identidade Social. Estudos Históricos*. Rio de Janeiro, vol.5, n.10, 1992, (pp.200-212) e *Memória, Esquecimento, silêncio*. Estudos Históricos, Rio de Janeiro, vol. 2, n.3, 1989, (pp. 3-15). 169
24. Using the concept of political culture by Ângela Castro Gomes, especially in the text *Cultura política e cultura histórica no Estado Novo*. In: Soihet, Raquel, Gontijo, Rebeca. *Culturas políticas e leituras do passado: historiografia e ensino de história*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização brasileira, 2007.
25. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
26. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
27. According to Marília Forjaz, Nelson Werneck Sodré (1964), Hélio Jaguaribe, Guerreiro Ramos, Wanderley Guilherme and Edgar Carone.
28. The remembrances of the interventor are part of the ideologies that galvanized the masses and propped up the “New States” as the dictatorial regimes in Spain, Portugal and Brazil have been called, while still in dialogues with the ideas of Benito Mussolini.
29. Concentrations constituted as auxiliary political forces of the Liberal party. They were organized in nuclei or chapters with 40 electors and in little time United a considerable number, many trained as personal guards for the interventor.
30. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
31. To use Michel Foucault’s concept of power as a strategy, power as a relation. Foucault, Michel. *Vigiar e Punir*. Editora Vozes, 1977. Idem, *Microfísica do Poder*, Rio de Janeiro, Graal, 1990.
32. Pandolfi, Dulce. *Os anos 30: as incertezas do regime*. In: Ferreira, Jorge; Delgado, Lucília de Almeida. *O Brasil republicano*, vol.2. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 2007.
33. See Ferreira, Marieta. *A crise dos anos 20 e os anos trinta*. <http://bibliotecadigital.fgv.br/dspace/handle/10438/6833?Show=full>
34. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
35. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
36. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
37. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
38. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
39. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
40. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
41. On 1932, in Pará, see the book Pinto, Walter. *1932: a Revolução Constitucionalista no Baixo Amazonas: contexto, revolta e produção do silêncio*. Belém: Editora Paka-tatu: 2012. That author provides a new approach and questions the silence produced concerning the 1932 movement in Pará.

42. Magalhães Barata here refers to the assassination of the candidate for the state legislature, the seafarers' leader and participation of the 1930 Revolution in Pará, when he hid the arms of rebels in boats. 170
43. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.
44. April 6 1935, Diário do Pará.

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