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# Administration in the twilight of the kingdom: Saint-Hilaire's records

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This essay aims to analyze the structure and operation of the public management of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil, and the Algarves, related to the diamond extraction industry through the texts of Saint-Hilaire, French botanist and naturalist. Saint-Hilaire visited and toured Brazil in 1817 in a journey throughout the country's interior offering detailed information on Brazil's organizational structure, operations management structure, the public management processes, and the management of human resources, finances, and contracts. The analysis of Saint-Hilaire's reports revealed a high degree of control, the slaves' work conditions, and the rigid social stratification of Brazil in the early 19th century. The essay concludes that Saint-Hilaire presented a deep and detailed description of the diamond extraction operation, offering a valuable contribution to the studies of the beginning of Brazil as an independent nation.

**Keywords:** administrative history; extractive industry; diamond cycle management.

## A administração no crepúsculo do reino: registros de Saint-Hilaire

O objetivo deste ensaio é analisar a estrutura e a operação da gestão pública no Reino Unido de Portugal, Brasil e Algarves, relacionadas à indústria extrativista de diamantes por meio das obras de Saint-Hilaire, botânico e naturalista francês, que visitou e percorreu o Brasil no século XIX, em viagem realizada em 1817. O autor descreveu aspectos ligados à estrutura organizacional, aos processos da operação de extração de diamantes, aos métodos de gestão pública, de recursos humanos, financeira e contratos no distrito dos diamantes. A análise de seus relatos revelou o alto grau de controle, bem como as condições de trabalho dos escravos e a rígida estratificação social do Brasil Império, com intensa utilização de mão de obra escrava, por meio do que se chamava à época de aluguel. Conclui-se que o autor fez extenso relato da operação, com inestimável contribuição para os estudos dos primórdios do Estado brasileiro.

**Palavras-chave:** história administrativa; indústria extrativista; gestão do ciclo dos diamantes.

## Administración en el crepúsculo del reino: los registros de Saint-Hilaire

El objetivo de este ensayo fue analizar la estructura y la operación de la gestión pública del Reino Unido de Portugal, Brasil y Algarves, relacionadas con la industria de extracción de diamantes a través de las obras de Saint-Hilaire, botánico y naturalista francés, que recorrió Brasil, en un viaje que realizado en 1817. El autor describió en detalles aspectos relacionados con la estructura organizacional, los procesos de la operación de extracción, los métodos de gestión pública, de recursos humanos, financiera y de contratos. El análisis de sus relatos reveló el alto grado de control, así como el uso intensivo del trabajo esclavo, a través de la subcontratación de recursos humanos, las condiciones de trabajo de los esclavos y la rígida estratificación social del reino. Se concluye que el autor presentó una detallada descripción de la operación lo que constituye una invaluable contribución a los estudios de los inicios del Estado brasileño.

**Palabras clave:** historia administrativa; industria extractiva; gestión del ciclo del diamante.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The historical research method aims to systematize, identify, collect, organize and critically evaluate documentary sources that are related to past events (Samara & Tupy, 2017).

In Brazil, historiographical research in administration has focused on business history (Costa, Barros & Martins, 2010; Curado, 2001; Vizeu, 2010); discussions related to the sources of historical research (Coraiola, 2012; Barros, 2016), to everyday life and to the story itself (Barros & Carrieri, 2013); formation in the field of management teaching (Bertero, Barros & Alcadipani, 2018; Vizeu, 2018; Wanderley, 2015, 2016); contributions and challenges of the comparative-historical methodology (Amorim-Neto & Rodrigues, 2016). These studies have been built on oral storytelling (Colomby, Peres, Lopes & Costa, 2016; Joaquim & Carrieri, 2018) and records such as letters, books, reports, diaries, paintings, sculptures, photographs, films, myths, legends, speeches, spaces (Costa & Silva, 2019) and testimonies of foreign travelers in the 19th century (Kuri, 2003), which is the case of this study, built on the reports by Saint-Hilaire.

The field of historical studies of Brazilian public administration is scarce, as stated by Costa and Costa (2016). As for the examinations originating from the production by Saint-Hilaire, there are none. According to Kuri (2003), "Saint-Hilaire is actually a stranger among us. Few details of his life and work have been studied. In France today, he is a forgotten character, which did not happen in his time when he held a prestigious position in the Parisian and French scientific circles".

The French botanist and naturalist made several trips around Brazil, between 1816 and 1822, which resulted in 19 works on natural sciences, religiosity, social life, architecture, mobility, legislation and politics, but these reports have been neglected as a source of analysis of imperial Brazil (Kuri, 2003). It is this gap that we propose to fill in this study, whose research question is: which characteristics of the structure, management and operation of the diamond district are highlighted by Saint-Hilaire?

To answer it, we analyzed the book *Travel through the diamond district and coast of Brazil* (Saint-Hilaire, 1974), in which the expeditions carried out between 1816 and 1817 are reported. We kept in mind that the documentary sources do not speak for themselves nor are they depositories of facts that occurred in the past (Costa & Silva, 2019). For this reason, methodologically, we use discourse analysis (Orlandi, 1990).

This study is relevant "given that the study of administration has never occupied a prominent place in Brazilian historiography" (Cabral, 2011), although texts have been produced within what would be demarcated pejoratively as administrative history (Cabral & Camargo, 2010). In fact, the analysis of historical sources and archives can contribute to the understanding of organizational phenomena and their articulation with the social and political (Costa & Silva, 2019), since organizations strategically instrumentalize their past through the creation and management of their collections and documentary archives (Barros, 2016). In the case at hand, it is necessary to consider the scarcity of information, since the entire collection of the diamond administration was lost in a fire at the headquarters building, that is nowadays the Diamantina city hall (Furtado, 1996).

This study is delimited in the first of the 7 periods proposed by Costa (2010), termed as "the phase of the construction of the national state". This periodization aimed to propose an alternative to the previous categorization, which faced the history of the Brazilian public administration in 3 phases: patrimonialist, bureaucratic and managerial (Bresser-Pereira, 2001).

This article is structured in 5 sections, in addition to this Introduction. In the next, we present the theoretical context, followed by the historical source per se – in this case, the text by Saint-Hilaire (1974) –, as well as the events about what happened. The third section is dedicated to methodological notes. The fourth section deals with the historical operation, that is, the critical process by which the book was submitted. Finally, on Thursday and last, we present our reflections, analyzes and proposals for future research.

## 2. CONTEXTUALIZATIONS: THEORY AND DOCUMENT

### 2.1 Historical Contextualization of Brazilian Public Administration

Research and publications on the history of Brazilian public administration have an initial milestone in Fleiuss, with the launch in 1926, of the administrative history of Brazil. In the 1950s, the Public Service Administrative Department (Dasp) started publishing a collection also called *Administrative History of Brazil*. Expected in 40 volumes, it was interrupted in 1994, when there were only three to be published (Ribeiro, 2009). According to Cabral (2011), research questions related to the history of administration in Brazil were treated “only tangentially” by the two main authors of studies on the formation of the Brazilian people, Caio Prado Junior and Sérgio Buarque de Holanda – respectively, in the 1930s and 1950s.

Some simplifying readings on the theme state that the Brazilian state only started with the seizure of power by Vargas in 1930 (Costa, 2010; Roncaglio, 2012). However, in this study, we start from the assumption that the history of the Brazilian State has antecedents in the Colony and that its inaugural point is the arrival of the royal family, in 1808 (Costa, 2010; Costa & Costa, 2018; Couto, 2010).

At that time, there was already a colonial administration in Brazil in charge of viceroys, with a deficient rigging. The current public management structure was divided into 4 segments, subordinate to the Overseas Council: metropolitan institutions, central administration, regional administration and local administration. The council, in turn, was subordinate to the Secretary of State for Business of the Navy and Overseas Territories (Costa, 2010).

From the point of view of territorial organization, Brazil was divided into captaincies, whose territories were subdivided into counties, which were composed of terms based in cities or towns. The terms were made up of parishes, which corresponded to the parishes of the ecclesiastical circumscription (Cabral & Camargo, 2010).

In 1808, with the transfer of the court to Brazil, conditions were created for the growth of the Brazilian bourgeoisie, even though everything happened without planning or organization. There are no records of how many people hurriedly came from Portugal. Soon after arrival, government bodies were created, and in 1816, Brazil had already been elevated to the status of United Kingdom to Portugal and Algarves (Costa, 2010; Couto, 2010).

### 2.2 The Document in question: Journey through the Diamond District

In this study, originally published in two volumes, in France, in 1833, Saint-Hilaire describes in detail the management structure of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and Algarves (1815-1822). This work, however, is limited to the chapters dedicated to the trip through the diamond district, in 1817.

Auguste François Cesar Prouvençal de Saint-Hilaire, French from a rich family of Orléans, studied botany at the Natural History Museum and the Paris medical school. In 1816, he was part of the delegation of the Duke of Luxembourg, extraordinary ambassador of France who was leaving for a diplomatic mission to the Portuguese court. Enthusiastic and curious about the variety and exuberance of Brazilian nature, Saint-Hilaire stayed for 6 years in Brazil, based in Rio de Janeiro, from where he left for countless trips throughout the Brazilian territory. The organization and publication of his work, a project that took almost 30 years to complete, obeyed the chronology of the different expeditions (Sodré, 2010). For decades, he has been publishing excerpts of his reports in the *Les Nouvelles Annales des Voyages* (Kury, 2003). Even before his expedition to Brazil, he had already written about the relationship between botany and society, responding to criticisms that botany is just a “science of words”, with its applications in medicine and agriculture (Kury, 2003).

After months of botanical research in Rio de Janeiro, he made an experimental trip to Ubá, an indigenous border located 30 leagues from the coast. According to Sodré, the account of this first trip already presented the features that characterized the author, who was not limited to botanical narratives: “His descriptions also penetrate the field of human geography. Saint-Hilaire developed an interest in the forms and processes of occupation and exploitation of land, by the civil and ecclesiastical administration, the spatial lexicon and toponyms, agricultural production, commerce, architecture, demography and the customs of the different populations” (Sodré, 2010).

He remained in Brazil on an official mission of the Natural History Museum of France, a trip authorized by the Minister of the Interior, as a naturalist traveler, with an annual remuneration of 3 thousand francs, then increased to 6 thousand francs (Kury, 2003). Although he was a naturalist, Saint-Hilaire did not limit himself to describing fauna and flora. Their reports described in detail the emergence, growth and decay of places, the lives of individuals and families of different social conditions and skin color, their customs, dress and eating habits, as well as economic, managerial and social aspects of the time.

Saint-Hilaire portrays legal ethics, religious practices, work processes and production. He also investigates problems and perspectives in the commerce and communications industry. During the 6 years he spent in Brazil, the Natural History Museum periodically documented the progress of the journey, in the publication *Instruction pour les voyageurs*, which reported on all French travelers on a mission (Kury, 2003).

Despite his origin, the narrative is not constructed under a Eurocentric view. The author reveals himself to be a scholar instigated by the real interest and affection for his objects of study, which instigated us to conduct this analysis. According to Kury (2003), Saint-Hilaire would be the personification of a new profile of naturalistic traveler idealized in the French scientific milieu: on-site research, specialization, analytical capacity and publication of the results obtained from an integrative perspective.

As for the work under study, it was the second volume in the series of 8 titles published after his return to France. At the time of publication, in 1833, Brazil had left the condition of the United Kingdom, with the proclamation of independence, followed by the government of Pedro I, his resignation and institution of the regency period. At the end of the work, Saint-Hilaire presents a “historical summary” of the political changes that occurred between his trip and the publication of the book. According to him, the provisional Trina Regency lived, “formed by men who are not capable, but moderate”. In the

end, he reveals his concern for the destinies of Brazil, recalling that he had found a country ruled by Dom João VI, which was in Rio de Janeiro “the sovereign of a multitude of small distinct states. There was a country called Brazil, but there were absolutely no Brazilians” (Saint-Hilaire, 1974).

### 3. METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

The sources for studies on the history of public administration are repertoires of laws regarding the Brazilian governmental organization. The speeches of the throne and presidential messages, reports by the Federal Court of Accounts, statistics, personal archives and life stories are biographical sources in which diaries and correspondence are included (Costa & Costa, 2016).

In this study, corroborating with Costa and Silva (2019), we understand that a document should be seen as a dynamic and socially constructed narrative, which demanded us to take a critical and reflective action of a (re)acknowledgement of Saint-Hilaire's text, its implications in our methodological choice. We opted to work with the 1974 edition, with a new preface and footnotes that did not appear in the first Portuguese edition, in 1941.

In this work, the monetary values are presented in the currency of the time, the Brazilian Real (BRL), and its multiples, preserving their form of notation. Thus, the \$ 001 notation is equivalent to one real, 1\$000 equals one thousand *réis* (one thousand reais) and 1.000\$000 is equivalent to one *conto de réis* (one million reais). The spelling of the translated text was maintained (1974), which, for example, used Tijuco, instead of Tejuco, to name the headquarters of the diamond district, which in the future would be the city of Diamantina. Just for historical consistency, the word “rent” was kept in references to slave labor.

The interpretation of the data, made by the analysis of the discourse, started from the assumption that the discursive can be defined as a social process whose relations are historically shaped by the social formation in which it occurs, ideologically constituted (Orlandi, 1990).

## 4. THE TWILIGHT OF THE KINGDOM IN THE DISTRICT OF DIAMONDS

### 4.1 The Diamond Cycle in Brazil

There are different versions about the beginning of the diamond cycle, because the participants of the event themselves tried to surround it with mysteries and misunderstandings (Furtado, 1999). Saint-Hilaire (1974) states that Bernardo Fonseca Lobo would have been the first to discover diamonds in *Serro Frio*, at an uncertain date, and that in 1729 this fact was already known by the Portuguese court.

Still in their narrative, in 1730, the diamonds were declared of royal property, by means of decree. Search and exploitation were permitted, provided they were authorized by the government and in accordance with the rules established: each slave employed in this activity should generate the payment of a capitation and the export of diamonds on ships that did not belong to Portugal was prohibited, and the transportation freight of each stone was equivalent to 1% of its value, among other determinations.

Capitation was a process of collecting royal rights that suffered many challenges, having been approved in 1731 and that started to be effectively charged from the following year (Magalhães, 2009). It was set up with dual purpose, because in addition to generating resources for the Crown, had the argument of “avoiding idleness of black freedmen and vagrants in general” (Razente, 2016). In a



short time, the capitation became unpopular and questioned, since it affected without considering any profits or losses inherent to the extractive sector, gold or diamonds. It was initially implemented only in the *Demarcação Diamantina* (“diamond district”), having been expanded to the captaincies of Minas Gerais and São Paulo in 1735 (Razente, 2016).

According to Svizzero (2006), after the initial discovery in the Tijuco camp, diamonds were found in other sites in Minas Gerais and in the states of Goiás, Mato Grosso, Mato Grosso do Sul, Bahia, Paraná, São Paulo, Piauí, Pará, Rondônia, Roraima and Amapá. Brazil lasted as the world's largest producer until 1867, when it was supplanted by South Africa.

Strictly speaking, there is no way to estimate the actual quantities of diamonds found in the first decades of Brazilian production, thanks to intense smuggling and prying on the sly (Svizzero, 2006), situation minimized by the changes introduced by the Marquis of Pombal.

In the initial system of the Portuguese Kingdom, tenants extracted diamonds and paid the crown through taxes. Such a practice, in addition to being unfair, since the income was not proportional to the work spent, caused the price of diamonds to drop in European markets, indicating that smuggling represented a significant portion of production. According to Saint-Hilaire (1974), in less than a decade international prices had a 75% drop due to excess supply, mostly for smuggling, that is, the crown did not receive the proper taxes.

The diamond district had a structure shaped by the changes made by Marquis of Pombal between 1750 and 1777, period characterized by Pombaline reforms. Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, the Marquis of Pombal, after 2 periods as a diplomat in England and Austria, he studied the role of Portugal in Europe, presenting diagnoses and proposals for change (Carvalho, 2003). Pombal noted Portugal's backwardness and mismatch vis-à-vis other European countries and recorded the neighbors' perceptions of their country: ignorance, fanaticism and indolence.

The rise of Marquês de Pombal, which modernized and profoundly altered the structure of government and Portuguese society, was soon present in the lucrative diamond market. Articulate and strategist, Pombal totally changed the management system when he decided that the government itself would explore, on its own, the diamond lands. Thereby, according to Saint-Hilaire (1974), “the diamond district was as if isolated from the rest of the universe; situated in a country governed by absolute power”. In his text, it is clear that this district was subjected to an even more absolute despotism. Social ties have been broken, or at least weakened; everything was sacrificed to the desire to ensure the crown exclusive ownership of the diamonds, as determined by the Permit of July 12, 1771, which extinguished the contract system and established a real monopoly on the extraction and commercialization of diamonds (Cabral & Camargo, 2010).

The Marquis of Pombal himself was in charge of supervising the work, which confirms the strategic importance of resources for the crown. The modernization of the Portuguese State and the removal of English influence were the determining strategies in Pombal's decisions, whose policy towards Brazil had 3 central elements: defense of the territory, economic expansion and strengthening of central power. These factors were clearly noted in the expressed Pombaline geopolitical guideline, whose objective was to realize the conquest and occupation of the interior regions (Russel-Wood, 1998).

This control was specified by Saint-Hilaire, who noted the isolation and despotism in the diamond district, in addition, specifically, the relationship between smugglers, government and

diamond production. According to him, in an attempt to stop the smuggling of stones, centralizing laws were passed, which started to govern the life of the place.

In fact, the State established and maintained control in the colony through a body of administrators and bureaucrats, chosen according to defined behavioral profiles (Russel-Wood, 1998). Thus, at the same time that administrative decentralization was stimulated by the kingdom, each captaincy was the object of control and monitoring. In them, the space for autonomy of administrators and local powers “had little chance of colliding with the interests and guidelines of the kingdoms” (Russel-Wood, 1998). In this way, the ability to negotiate with local interests and populations proves to be a determining factor in the success of the expansion of Portuguese businesses in the overseas colonies. In the words of Saint-Hilaire, “rulers and agents could not remain isolated from the environment around them, nor were they immune to pressure” (1974). Strictly speaking, instead of being seen as an indication of human weakness or undermining the authority of the sovereign and the efficient administration of the empire, it was precisely these qualities that allowed the Portuguese to face overwhelming adversity through selective accommodation to the particularities of an empire characterized by cultural and ethnic diversity (Russel-Wood, 1998).

Portugal entered the 19th century with apparent economic prosperity, derived from the resources extracted from the colonies, but in a political crisis, due to the questioning of the legacy of Marquis of Pombal (Carvalho, 2003). Diamonds followed as a wealth wasted by a Portugal without mercantile infrastructure and without mastery of marketing channels; with a strong bourgeoisie; with capital, techniques, education, a long-term horizon and a minimum of freedom. Portuguese society did not benefit from this, and the government remained perplexed and disoriented with the management of diamonds (Rabello, 1997). This scenario included Marran Jews, expelled from Portugal for religious intolerance, who went to take shelter in Amsterdam. These were Jews of Portuguese origin, who had knowledge of the techniques and the craft of stoning. As a result, Portugal agreed to act as “a mere supplier of rough stones, as not even qualified lapidaries had” (Rabello, 1997).

## 4.2 The Governance Structure and Administrative Functions

With the installation of the Royal Family in Rio de Janeiro, the city became the capital of the Portuguese Empire throughout its extension, including colonies in Africa and Asia. The crowning and acclamation ceremony of Dom João VI, in February 1818, almost 2 years after the death of his mother, Dona Maria I, was a unique event in history: a European sovereign who dies and a prince who ascends the throne and is hailed as king in a former overseas domain.

Soon after the arrival of the Royal Family, more than 20 organizations were created in Brazil, including schools, museums, public agencies, royal academies and, on September 5, 1808, the board and administration of *Extração Diamantina*, with the same jurisdictions as the office previously located in Lisbon. In 1812, with limited technical quality, the *Lapidar Diamantes* Factory was installed in Rio de Janeiro, and on September 14, 1816, a decree was signed to improve work at the Diamond Stewardship (Couto, 2010).

Saint-Hilaire visited the headquarters of the Mine Attorney General, located in Arraial do Tijuco, now Diamantina, which was a privilege, because the diamond district was closed not only to foreigners, but also to nationals, forming a separate state in the middle of the vast Brazilian Empire (Saint-Hilaire, 1974).



On that occasion, Saint-Hilaire detailed the management structure of the diamond district (Box 1), with the monthly remuneration of almost everyone involved, even though throughout the text he used and mentioned different denominations for the currencies of Brazil, such as *réis*, *mil-réis*, *contos de réis*, *cruzados*, *patacas* and *vinténs*. In addition, French francs are also used in part of the text. In order to standardize the remuneration, in *réis*, we use Costa and Marcondes (2016), dealing with currency in Brazil Colony and Empire. When describing the cost of the main foodstuffs in Arraial do Tijuco, Saint-Hilaire presents the values in both Brazilian and French currency, allowing a conversion factor to be calculated used in this study.

### BOX 1 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF THE DIAMOND DISTRICT

N.	Position name	Function	Remuneration	Quantity
1	Mine Attorney General	Charter of the regiment: 2/8/1771. 20 job assignments are listed, and he had the key to the safe.	3.200\$000 + 800\$000 for travel expenses.	One. They also used to be called the quartermaster of diamonds.
2	Ombudsman (diamond inspector)	Charter of the regiment: 23/5/1772. Judicial function.	2.000\$000	One
3	Administration officers (cash administrators)	Charter of the regiment: 2/8/1771, with 10 assignments.	NI*	NI
4	Treasurer	Stock guard, with the first treasurer holding one of strong box key.	800\$000	Two, the second being also "general manager".
5	Bookkeeper (quartermaster clerk)	Charter of the regiment: 2/8/1771, with 2 assignments. The first bookkeeper has the strong box key.	1.040\$000	
6	Commissioners	Clerks	320\$000	Seven (in 1817)
7	General manager (inspector general)	Direction and supervision of diamond extraction.	In 1817, the position had been suppressed, and his assignments, passed on to the 2nd treasurer.	None

\* NI: Not informed

Source: Based in Saint-Hilaire (1974); Salgado (1990) and Cabral (2010).

We assume, based on the price conversions of foodstuffs for sale in Tijuco, described by Saint-Hilaire (1974), that a French franc was equivalent to 160 *réis*. Some name differences were identified between Saint-Hilaire and the positions described by Salgado (1990), these are in parentheses, in the

column “Position name”. Note that the remuneration values are presented only by Saint-Hilaire, which also describes the main functions and the number of people invested in each position.

Saint-Hilaire (1974), repeatedly highlighted the concentration of power of the Mine Attorney General. It was an almost absolute power, as it regulated, at its discretion, all aspects of work in the mines, authorized or prevented the entry and exit of people, with military force at its disposal to implement the measures it deemed convenient to attack smuggling and tax evasion.

The management of the stones was based on the Council of the *Junta Real dos Diamantes*, integrated by the quartermaster himself, who presided over it, and formed by 4 more members: the diamond inspector, the two treasurers and the first bookkeeper. To this was added the secretary, who participated in the sessions, but did not have the right to vote.

After describing and analyzing the management, decision and control structure, Saint-Hilaire is dedicated to the operation itself, that is, the stone extraction sites.

#### 4.3 The Operation of the Diamond Extraction Sites

Initially, it is necessary to become familiar with some terms used by Saint-Hilaire, such as troops and service. The author explains that a troop consisted of the grouping of people under the command of each administrator – in 1817, there were 8 troops in operation. Service, on the other hand, was the name of the locations where diamonds were mined, so a troop could be geographically divided into more than one service. However, to minimize theft, administrators ordered continuous movement of troops between different services, so that the slaves had no way of hiding diamonds for later removal from the extraction sites.

In 1817, production no longer reached the peaks recorded in the previous century and the administration was indebted, so the value of the weekly “rent” for each slave had fallen to \$675 and subsequently dropped to \$600 (Saint-Hilaire, 1974).

By way of comparison, about 30 years before, when the structure was implemented under the aegis of the Pombaline reforms, the rent value of 1 captive reached 1\$200.

In 1817, Saint-Hilaire claimed that there were around a thousand slaves working on diamonds, but he was informed that this number, at the end of the previous century, had reached 3 thousand. Therefore, it can be concluded that the expenditure on the rental of slaves alone had been reduced to 1/6 of that spent at the time of the implementation of the reforms that were a consequence of the policies of Marquis of Pombal.

The structure of the extraction operation, detailed in Box 2, had 8 administrators (managers), 1 head (sub-administrator) per service, 3 overseers per service (responsible for monitoring and punishing slaves), 1 warehouse guard (supplies and materials), 1 miller (grinds the grain), carpenters, locksmiths, 1 chaplain for each pair of troops and dozens of slaves.

**BOX 2**      **OPERATING STRUCTURE (EXTRACTION) OF THE DIAMOND DISTRICT**

N.	Name	Function	Remuneration	Quantity
1	Administrators	Manages a group of people called “troop”.	200\$000	Eight (in 1817)
2	Heads	Sub-administrators, in charge of supervising the overseers. Can replace administrators if necessary.	NI	One per service
3	Overseers	Monitor and punish slaves, if necessary.	100\$000	Three per service
4	Warehouse guard	Control supplies and materials.	100\$000	One
5	Miller	Grain grinding and foodstuffs.	100\$000	One
6	Carpenter	Assemble, dismantle and maintain the structures.	NI	NI
7	Locksmith	Assemble, dismantle and maintain the structures.	NI	NI
8	Chaplain	Religious services	160\$000	1 for two troops
9	Slaves	Diamond search job.	\$675/week	“Various” for services

NI: Not informed

**Source:** Based in Saint-Hilaire (1974).

In detailing the operation of the diamond extraction sites, Saint-Hilaire makes an accurate portrait of the Brazilian society at the time. It is evident that the social ascension in colonial Brazil was not limited only to accumulating gold and *sesmarias*.

Gold, for the slave, meant the possibility of obtaining freedom through the acquisition of a manumission letter. When this happened, the blacks who had come out of captivity, as well as “free browns and mulattos” (Palacin, 1994), mimicked the behavior of white lords: they sought to buy other black men for manual labor and enjoy idleness. That was the affirmation process of common social ascension at that time (Razente, 2016), although the participation of the freedmen in the slaveholding was very modest (Luna, 1982).

Saint-Hilaire (1974) affirms that such practice was usual among the inhabitants of Arraial do Tijuco, because, as the government used hired slave labor, social ascension occurred through the “outsourcing” of the workforce, that is, the acquisition of captives, who were put to work in the mines, resulting in profits for their white masters and former freed slaves (freedmen).

#### 4.4 People Management

Based on the information summarized in Boxes 1 and 2, there was a brutal concentration of power and remuneration. In fact, considering the monthly expenditure on a slave in the order of 2\$700 – 4 weeks of rental costs – and assuming a contingent at the time of a thousand men, it appears that the expenses of the crown with the Mine Attorney General were equivalent to the hypothetical cost of

more than 1.3 thousand slaves – considering that the Mine Attorney General received, between salary and travel expenses, 4 *contos de réis* monthly = 4.000\$000.

This comparison is still fallacious, however, because such revenues were earned by their owners, who should dress them up and treat them in the event of illness. To estimate the cost with each slave, it is necessary to compare the prices of foodstuffs with the allocation received by each of them.

According to the text, each week, blacks received 1/4 bushel of cornmeal for their food, an amount of beans and a little salt, and to these supplies was added a piece of roll of smoke. When it was missing, beans were replaced by meat. Blacks ate 3 times a day and, because they did not have much time during the day, they were forced to cook their food at night, and often, the only fuel they had to do it was dried herbs (Saint-Hilaire, 1974).

The interpretation of these reports is hampered by the use of different units of measurement, such as arrobas, bushels, bundles, among others. However, the author emphasizes that “the amounts charged in Tijuco were more expensive than in other parts of the province” (Saint-Hilaire, 1974). Box 3 shows the acquisition values of the main consumption items in the region. As he mentioned different currencies, the values were adjusted in the Brazilian and French currencies, in values of that time.

There are no elements to calculate the cost of supplies for each slave, so we estimate it as 1/5 of the rent, which would total a weekly cost of \$800 for each. Even so, the pay of the quartermaster would be equivalent to about 1,100 slaves.

### BOX 3 PRICES CHARGED AT TIJUCO IN SEPTEMBER 1817

Item	Measure	Price, according to the original text		Adjusted value
		In local currency	in <i>réis</i>	in <i>réis</i>
Cassava flour	1 bushel	\$750	4.68	\$750
Corn	1 bushel	\$600	3.75	\$600
Rice	1 bushel	1\$800	11.24	1\$800
Bacon	1 arroba	8 <i>patacas</i>	16.00	2\$560
Bean	1 bushel	\$900	5.62	\$900
Chicken	1 unit	\$150	0.95	\$150
Firewood	1 small beam	1 <i>vintém</i>	0.20	\$20

Source: Adapted from Saint-Hilaire (1974).

Based on this information, one can estimate monthly personnel costs in 1817. It is assumed that *i)* the salary of the administration officers is lower than that of the ombudsman and higher than that of the treasurer, in the amount of 1.000\$000; *ii)* there were at least 2 bookkeepers; *iii)* the heads, similarly, would have ordered an intermediary between administrators and overseers, assuming \$120; and *iv)* each service had 1 carpenter, 1 locksmith, 1 miller (for grinding grains) and 1 warehouse guard, all with the same remuneration.

Governance structure (15 people)	14.320\$000
Extraction operation (60 people)	7.400\$000
Rent and supplies of a thousand slaves	8.000\$000
Estimated total of the operation	29.720\$000

That is, 30 *contos de réis* to maintain the operation of the diamond district, about 187.5 thousand francs. We emphasize that this figure does not include the costs of the surveillance posts and the military on duty in the diamond district or the costs of sending the minerals annually to Rio de Janeiro. Although the operation was not unprofitable, at the time of the report its gains were reduced, since, at the end of the 18th century, up to 3,000 slaves had already been employed, with a weekly cost of 1\$200.

Even with smuggling losses estimated at 50% of the extraction, the crown gains from Brazil's wealth – diamonds, gold, cotton, sugar – significant, to the point of reversing the financial balance between Portugal and England. All this wealth was generated with slave labor, which constituted the operational core, while the Portuguese were responsible for the management and control of operations.

All involved parties had profits, except the enslaved blacks, who were destined for all manual labor in unhealthy conditions, without any payment, time off, adequate food and subjected to punishment and beatings.

#### 4.5 Extraction Management

Saint-Hilaire remained for a week in the service of the Rio Pardo, when he accompanied the work of extraction, from September 22, 1817.

To access the extraction sites, it was necessary to cross the mines regiment posts, at which travelers were inspected, in order to prevent smuggling. Saint-Hilaire entered the district thanks to a crown ordinance, which franchised his access. He does not describe how he obtained the ordinance or details whether he was banned from circulating throughout the district, but states that the quartermaster authorized his displacements. However, he emphasizes the politeness and good education of the members of the regiments, “completely different from this coarse rusticity that often characterizes the European soldier” (Saint-Hilaire, 1974).

At the time, production in most rivers and streams was already depleted, and services were moved randomly, without prior planning. The motivation was twofold. In addition to looking for new places, it aimed to prevent blacks from hiding some stones for later recovery, after all, the slaves' work was arduous, because they were “obliged to be continuously in the water” (Saint-Hilaire, 1974). More than that, as a result of feeding with low nutritional content, almost always with cold and undercooked food, the slaves became “slow and apathetic” (Saint-Hilaire, 1974).

In addition, work accidents were common, caused by crushing of displaced stones, landslides or even drowning. Even so, Saint-Hilaire states that slaves preferred work in the mines to household chores or on farms, because in the extraction the rules were standardized and, “as long as they adapted”, they would have nothing to fear. With an ironic tone, he asserted: “Gathered in large numbers, these unfortunates have fun at their jobs” (Saint-Hilaire, 1974, p. 16).

If, however, we recover the considerations on how to ascend socially in Brazil Empire, it is evident that the main motivation was rational and laid in the award policy, which determined that every slave

who found a diamond weighing at least an octave would have to buy it paid for by the administration and would be awarded new clothes and, above all, a manumission letter, that is, freedom. If they found smaller stones, they would receive proportional prizes.

Throughout 1816, only 3 slaves in the entire diamond district were emancipated, in an estimated universe of one thousand, which reflects the rigidity of the local social structure.

Saint-Hilaire also described the procedures for receiving, evaluating, weighing and storing the stones, with the respective signatures, headings, inspection, sequential checks until they are placed in boxes. Annually, the stones were transported to court, with the participation of the cavalry regiment and passage through Vila Rica (currently Ouro Preto), when a general would initial the boxes without opening them, allowing the entourage to go to the capital.

There is an excessive control from the extraction in the rivers to the arrival of the diamonds in Rio de Janeiro, which aimed to give the crown the certainty of good business management.

## 5. REFLECTIONS: BRAZIL, A MUSEUM OF GREAT NEWS

In this study, by pointing out the main characteristics of structure, management and operation of the diamond district, it was possible to outline a portrait of the Brazilian public administration, at the dawn of the United Kingdom of Portugal, Brazil and Algarves (1816 and 1817). The beginning of the formation of the National State was experienced, which began with the arrival of the Royal Family in 1808. Although there was a previous administration during 3 centuries of colonial Brazil, the constitution of the National State was considered from 1808, with the arrival of the Prince Regent. A whole bureaucratic apparatus was hastily assembled, making it possible to transform “a chaotic constellation of overlapping organisms into a state apparatus” (Costa, 2010).

At the time of Saint-Hilaire's visit, Brazil had recently emerged from the colonial phase of the viceroys, who exercised a disorderly administration, in which orders, charges, attributions, circumscriptions, provisions and missions were mixed. According to Costa (2010), Brazil had a structure “that did not obey uniform principles of division of labor, symmetry and hierarchy”. Among the sectoral bodies, included the diamonds stewardship. The report has a descriptive and detailed nature, but focuses on diamond extraction operations. Even so, the French naturalist traveler ignores this state in formation in his reports. At least two lines of positioning can be inferred from him in this respect.

The first hypothesis is that Saint-Hilaire would have chosen not to displease the Portuguese-Brazilian authorities at the time of his trip, choosing an exempt posture, in terms of critical or political positions. This idea is not supported by the fact that his work only began to be published 10 years after his return to France. In the volume under analysis, the final chapter is dedicated to presenting the “revolutions of Brazil until the abdication of Emperor D. Pedro” (Saint-Hilaire, 1974). Between his return and the publication, the return of D. João VI, the independence, the government of Dom Pedro, his resignation and the institution of the provisional triune regency.

The second hypothesis is based on the concepts of French Enlightenment, by Saint-Hilaire, and in the attempt to bring Portugal closer to the European scientific field. Kury (2004) points out that, since 1780, the small and limited scientific elite of Portugal started to approach the knowledge centers of Europe, as one of the consequences of the Pombaline reforms, notably France and England.



Although this work does not fit to deepen the French enlightenment, it appears that the journey of Saint-Hilaire presented elements dear to the enlightenment, as defending the usefulness of nature studies, “devout utilitarianism” and the belief that the solution to humanity’s problems would come from a detailed study of the 3 kingdoms: animals, plants and minerals (Kury, 2004). In other words, it is plausible that a possible civilizing and problem-solving strategy came together from nature, of Saint-Hilaire with the perception of importance, on the part of the Portuguese-Brazilian intellectual elite, of an approximation with scientific knowledge beyond the Iberian peninsula.

This would, in summary, be the best hypothesis for the justification of a descriptive report, shy in criticism or disapproval of the formal and informal aspects of the diamond district and UK administration. At the same time that foreign travelers contributed to the study, analysis and dissemination of information about the nature and social characteristics of Brazil, there was a risk of the use of this information by the kingdoms of England, France and Spain, the 3 feared by Portugal as possible invaders of his colonies (Alexandre, 1993).

It is worth remembering that the discourse of the voyager expresses the vision of a Frenchman, and, according to Orlando (1990), production conditions of the text shape the multiple meanings associated with it. Saint-Hilaire and the French academy were never innocent. His expedition collected more than 30,000 specimens from Brazilian soil, and he described in detail the state operations. On the other hand, it concludes the last chapter of the work with a view of commitment to Brazil, in which he did not shy away from drawing an analogy between the destinies of the newborn Empire with the age of the prince, then 6 years old: “It is a child who still unites the provinces of this vast empire!” And he concludes by stating: “I am connected to them by the forces of sympathy and gratitude, I love Brazil almost as much as my country” (Saint-Hilaire, 1974).

For Portugal, even though Saint-Hilaire did not make it explicit, the scenario was bleak. A colonial administration without rationality, slow, fragile, despotic and centralized received the arrival of a court that had escaped the imminent French invasion. The diamonds removed from Brazil, even with all the surveillance apparatus, were objects of theft, stealing, evasion, diversions of all sorts. Even the minerals that arrived in Lisbon legally were exported as raw stone, because not even the stoning business was dominated. The end of a cycle of almost a century was experienced, in which production costs were incompatible with the quantities found in the diamond district, and it was possible to have a deficient operation even with the full and unjustified use of slave labor.

Finally, we understand that our research opens the way for other studies of public administration based on reports from foreign travelers and for research on slave labor or that evidence the relationships and dynamics of power, emphasizing the political dimension of such differences in ideological, socio-historical and cultural terms, as well as for works focusing on policies for the dissemination, promotion and management of social equality.

The research agenda should also include studies on the change in Brazilian public administration in the period, including the economic, political and social factors associated with the evolution of the Brazilian State, that must also focus on studies on the population of African origin, fundamental group in the constitution and formation of Brazil.

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