

JOAQUIM NABUCO, A BRAZILIAN LIGHT IN WASHINGTON

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During most of the 19th century, Brazil and the United States were predominantly estranged from each other. After its independence in 1822, Brazil dedicated itself to the task of obtaining the diplomatic recognition of other nations. Although the United States was the first country to grant diplomatic recognition to the new South American nation, it was clear at the time that the leaders of the new country valued little the recognition from the nation to the north, in their evaluation merely a republic, and a young and expressionless republic at that. Although Brazil was the first country to formally recognize the Monroe Doctrine, and even to propose a permanent treaty with the US on this basis, the diplomatic recognition of England seemed much more important to the leaders of the new Empire in South America. In addition, the United States had as its priority tasks as the expansion to the west and to avoid the pitfalls of European diplomacy. With this in mind, Brazil certainly did not appear high on the list of US foreign policy priorities.

The picture of relative detachment described above began to change in the second half of the 19th century. Several diplomatic misunderstandings led to the gradual departure between Brazil and England. At the same time, the US emerged from its Civil War as a more united, strong and fast-growing country, more willing to engage diplomatically with the world. Brazilian coffee exports found a strong consumer market in the United States, and gradually the nation to the north gained the space previously occupied by England in the foreign policy of the Empire. But this did not mean an official change in the foreign policy paradigm of the two countries. This change would come after the proclamation of the republic in Brazil.

Although the first decade of the republic in Brazil was quite tumultuous, the new regime achieved some stability with the presidencies of Campos

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Sales and Rodrigues Alves. Part of this stability was in foreign policy: in 1902 Rodrigues Alves invited José Maria da Silva Paranhos Júnior, the Baron of Rio Branco, to head the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. At that time, the Baron was already an extremely popular person in Brazil and deeply experienced in foreign policy. The Baron's contributions to Brazilian foreign policy were many, but the most central was the adoption of a new foreign policy paradigm. Following the trend of the previous decades, the Baron consolidated the centrality of the United States in Brazilian foreign policy in a paradigm called Americanism. Central gesture of the adoption of this new paradigm was the elevation of the diplomatic representation of Brazil in Washington at the embassy level. For the first Brazilian ambassador to the United States, the Baron chose none other than Joaquim Aurélio Barreto Nabuco de Araújo.

Generally Nabuco is best remembered for his struggle against slavery and for his literary career than for his diplomatic performance in Washington. When summoned by the Baron to occupy the new position he already had extensive political experience, mainly in the abolitionist campaign. With the proclamation of the Republic, Nabuco imposed a kind of self-exile, moving away from public life. In this period he founded the Brazilian Academy of Letters and wrote some of the greatest classics of Brazilian historiography. Faced with these feats, his years in Washington may seem of lesser importance, even for being under the command of the Baron. My interpretation is that nothing could be further from the truth.

The objective of this text is to examine the diplomatic work of Joaquim Nabuco as ambassador in Washington, between 1905 and 1910. Although summoned by the Baron to assume the position of ambassador, Nabuco had reached a conclusion very similar to that of the Baron independently: Brazil should privilege the United States in its foreign policy. Nevertheless, the Americanism of Joaquim Nabuco had peculiar characteristics, that distinguished it from the Americanism of the Baron. The Baron's Americanism had predominantly practical characteristics, seeking Brazil's "national interest", as the Baron perceived it. Nabuco saw in the approach with the USA the possibility of building something bigger, that would serve more than the interests of Brazil. In this sense, he had a broader ideological liberalism than the Baron. My interpretation is that this liberalism was already present in Nabuco in his previous political trajectory, and in this way there is cohesion between the abolitionist Nabuco, the historian Nabuco and the Nabuco diplomat. Joaquim Nabuco's diplomatic contribution had the potential to transform what was understood by international relations, something that the Baron's contribution – attached to a cynical realist paradigm – did not have.

With this goal in mind, this text begins with a brief review of Joaquim

Nabuco's biography. Although he is a well-known personage of Brazilian historians, I visit his early years, his political career within the Liberal Party, his abolitionist campaign, his intellectual career, and finally his entrance into diplomacy. As much as possible the text follows a chronological structure, but the objective is to observe the cohesion in the ideas of Nabuco that led him to propose in the approach of Brazil with the United States the construction of a new model of international politics.

First years and abolitionism

Joaquim Nabuco was born in Recife, Pernambuco, on August 19, 1849 (basic biographical information on Joaquim Nabuco is very well known. One can search simply, for example, at <http://www.academia.org.br/academicos/joaquim-nabuco>). He was the son of Ana Benigna Barreto Nabuco de Araújo and of José Tomás Nabuco de Araújo. Three members of the paternal line, the great-uncle, the grandfather and the father, were lifelong senators of the Empire. Despite starting his career in the Conservative Party, Nabuco de Araújo became one of the most important leaders of the Liberal Party. He became "the statesman of the empire," as his son called him, one of the leading Liberal leaders of the entire Second Kingdom (Nabuco 1897).

Joaquim Nabuco spent the first years of his life away from his parents. A few months after his birth, his father was elected deputy and left with his family to Rio de Janeiro. Nabuco was under the care of his godmother, Ana Rosa Falcão de Carvalho, owner of the sugar mill Massangana. With the death of the godmother, in 1857, he moved to Rio de Janeiro. As with almost all of the Brazilian imperial elite, Nabuco studied at Pedro II College and from there he joined the Law School of São Paulo. He showed little interest in legal studies, but was influenced by Professor Jose Bonifacio, the Young, to adopt progressive liberalism as a political ideology. According to the custom of the time, he transferred in the fourth year of the Law School of Recife, in order to have the experience of the south and the north of the country.

Nabuco was still in his last year of the Law School when he defended a slave named Thomas, accused of murdering his master. In the defense Nabuco stated that the slave had not committed a crime: he had removed an obstacle. The defense was successful enough for Thomas to have the penalty reversed from execution to forced labor. The episode gave great fame to Nabuco, but although he was formally ready to follow his father's footsteps and to enter the parliamentary career, this passage was made difficult due to the rule of the Conservatives in Pernambuco at that time, and it took eight years

before he was elected deputy. But he filled this time well: in Brazil he worked as a journalist in different newsrooms, published some texts and worked as a lawyer with his father. He also made a trip to Europe between 1873 and 1874, when he met some of the greatest intellectuals and politicians on the continent and acquired the passion of a lifetime for London.

Nabuco was able to be named a diplomatic attaché to Washington by Princess Isabel in April 1876. During his 14 months in the United States he spent little time in Washington. Instead he lived in New York and traveled the country most of the time. He felt tempted to pursue a diplomatic career. However, at the beginning of 1878 the Liberals returned to power. Nabuco de Araújo passed away in March, but not without first getting the party leaders the commitment to include the son in the list of candidates. Nabuco was elected last in the list, despite being little known in the province.

Between 1879 and 1881 the Liberals attempted to pass some reforms, and gradually Nabuco became prominent and the theme of abolition gaining strength. In 1880 he helped found the *Sociedade Brasileira contra a Escravidão*, and soon became one of the movement's most prominent leaders. During the parliamentary holidays, between 1880 and 1881, he traveled to Europe to seek support from foreign abolitionist movements, culminating in the encouragement received from the Anti-Slavery Society in London. The firm stance against slavery weighed politically against Nabuco. Without electoral support in Pernambuco and before a new dissolution of the House he did not obtain a new mandate. He then returned to London from 1882 to May 1884, where he was correspondent for the *Jornal do Comércio* and legal adviser. More important, however: in London he wrote *O abolicionismo* (1883).

Despite parliamentary resistance, the abolitionist idea was gaining ground in the following years. Nabuco returned to Brazil in 1884 and was candidate again in Recife. His campaign was highlighted by the appeal to public opinion, mass demonstrations and conferences at the Teatro Santa Isabel, unusual things at the time. Even with typical difficulties of the electoral process of the time, Nabuco managed to be elected. He found, however, a parliament still resistant to abolition. The next years presented difficulties, but in 1888 Nabuco witnessed the proclamation of the Lei Áurea, putting an end to slavery in Brazil.

Self-exile, career as historian and conversion to monroism

Ironically, abolition accelerated the arrival of the republic in Brazil. With the proclamation of the new regime, Nabuco moved away from the par-

liamentary life. He devoted himself primarily to the offices of writer and historian. A friend of Machado de Assis, he helped found the Brazilian Academy of Letters in 1897, where he made the inaugural speech and of which he was the perpetual secretary general. In this phase of his departure from public life, he won his life with difficulty: he practiced law (in which he did not have much success) and journalism (he collaborated especially with *O Jornal do Brasil* in its monarchist phase and with the *Revista Brasileira*). He also wrote some great books and other works: *Porque continuo a ser monarchista* (1890), a pamphlet in defense of the deposed regime; *Balmaceda* (1895), biography of the Chilean statesman (in reality an exercise of comparative politics between Brazil and Chile in which the monarchist position of the author is perceived); *A intervenção estrangeira durante a revolta da armada* (1896), a work on diplomatic history; *Um estadista do Império* (released in 3 volumes between 1897 and 1899), a biography of his father (in fact, the political history of the country); and finally, *Minha formação* (1900), a memoir that once again tells a good deal of the history of the empire.

Although Nabuco initially refused to join the Republican regime, he gradually drifted away from other more inflexible monarchists. His monarchism became purely intellectual and affective. He ended the mourning for the monarchy in 1899 and accepted the invitation of President Campos Sales to return to his diplomatic career. He became at one time ambassador of Brazil to London, the most prestigious diplomatic post of the time, and envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary on special mission in the matter of Brazil with England, regarding the limits of English Guiana. Nabuco was involved with the question of Guyana until 1904. The defense was delivered to King Vitor Emmanuel III of Italy, arbitrator of the matter, in 1903. The arbitration was issued in June 1904. Despite the defense formulated by Nabuco, Vitor Emanuel III considered insufficient the evidence presented by both Brazil and England. He divided the territory almost in half between the two litigants using only geographical criteria, with some advantage for England. It was neither a complete defeat nor a loss so significant for Brazil, but the result was very shocking to Nabuco. In his own words, “in matters with England (...) a weak country like Brazil can be considered a winner, when it gets half of what it claims” (Pereira 2005, 11), and on Vitor Emmanuel III, “if we were to subject ourselves to Our sovereignty over two-thirds of Brazil, he would say that we have no right” (Nabuco 1949, 169).

Besides the personal aspect of the defeat, Nabuco was alarmed that Vitor Emmanuel III's arbitration was based on the principles defined for the Congo by the Berlin Conference of 1885, and not the primacy of discovery and historical occupation invoked by Brazil. According to the doctrine used,

the only recognized means of acquiring and preserving sovereignty would be the requirement of full present possession and effective occupation of the territory. According to Nabuco himself, respecting this criterion, two thirds of the Brazilian territory of that time, especially the Amazon region, would be in danger (Ricupero 2005, 7).

The defeat in the litigation with England marked the definitive turn of Nabuco towards monroism. In that episode it became clear to him that Brazil had no chance of competing with Europeans and maintaining its territory. It is mainly from there that he came to understand that only the US and the Monroe Doctrine could protect Brazil against European imperialist pretensions. According to him, “such a policy would be worth the greatest of armies, the greatest navies we could ever have” (Ricupero 2005, 9). From this, the Monroe doctrine should be accepted by Brazil “as the outer formula of the independence of our continent, as the law of our international orbit apart from that of the Old World” (Pereira 2005, 11). Brazil was “a world over which the greed of the nations that hunger for land, of the races that need to expand” (Pereira 2005, 11), and the Monroe Doctrine, “a defense against the foreigners *bona fide*, a forbidden possession” (Pereira 2005, 12). In other words, Nabuco believed Brazil had to choose “between monroism and European colonization” (Ricupero 2005, 6).

It is important to locate historically this interpretation of Nabuco. The world lived then the era of Imperialism. Within this context it is easier to understand the words of Nabuco himself: “My impression is that for all the countries of Europe and America the external problem tends more and more to overcome internal problems and that we are moving towards a time when the fate of all of them without exception has to be affected by the solution that has the conflict of influence and preponderance between the great current systems of forces, such as the Triple and the Dual Alliance, the British Empire, the Monroe Doctrine, etc.” (Letter to Campos Sales, cited in Nabuco 1949, 403).

Against this background, even before becoming ambassador Nabuco already defended that “our diplomacy must be mainly done in Washington” (Ricupero 2005, 5). In sum: the defeat in the Guyana case was a turning point for Nabuco. His motivation was, above all, the security of the Brazilian territory, threatened, in his opinion, by a European legal tendency dangerous for Brazil, exemplified by the erroneous sentence of Vitor Emmanuel III, in the arbitration with Great Britain (Ricupero 2005). In view of this, the only means of securing two-thirds of the Brazilian territory would be for Nabuco the Doctrine of Monroe. In his words: “I do not see any other intuition on which the conservation of our great national whole depends so much” (Costa

1968, 48-49).

Roosevelt's mediation in 1904-1905, which put an end to the Russo-Japanese war, was especially important for Nabuco to confirm his view of the United States (Nabuco 1911). Writing to Roosevelt he said: "I ask Your Excellency to kindly accept the expression of our gratification and common American pride for the noble page you wrote in the history of civilization. The whole world will read this as a preface to a new era of peace (...) In that sense you have created for the American presidency a function that will win the moral hegemony of the world, the only one that can be accepted" (Telegram from Nabuco to Theodore Roosevelt, August 30, 1905, cited in Pereira 2005, 10).

From then on, Nabuco confirmed the hypothesis he had formulated when he failed in the case of Guyana: the US should be the preferential option of Brazil's foreign policy. He was very explicit in this sense: writing to his friend Gastão da Cunha he said "I am a monroist" (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Gastão da Cunha, December 14, 1905, cited in Pereira, 2005, 12) and on another occasion he stated that monroism conferred a "moral alliance" on the continent (Nabuco, 1911, 146-147). He "prided himself that there was nobody in the diplomatic service who surpassed him in his monroism or favoring a closer approach to the American government" (Ricupero, 2005, 2).

Ambassador in Washington

A few months passed before Nabuco could have the opportunity to put his theory into practice. It was then that the Baron of Rio Branco invited him to take over the new embassy in Washington, in February 1905. The US returned the gesture by elevating the representation in Rio de Janeiro to embassy as well. With this gesture the Baron intended to move the diplomatic axis of Brazil, from London to Washington. Nabuco had no connection with the initiative to create the embassy, which is entirely due to the Baron, and even expressed doubts as to the convenience or opportunity of the gesture (Ricupero 2005, 3). However, the Baron was right to take this initiative, and Nabuco was benefited by it. From the American point of view, the act expressed, through the symbolic language of protocol formalism, that Brazil became for the government of the United States its main partner in South America (Ricupero 2005, 3). Beyond the symbolism, Nabuco would have a protocol advantage that other diplomats did not possess (Ricupero 2005, 3-4). Finally, the Baron intended to use Nabuco to provoke answers from American monroists against attacks on Brazil. One of the most emblematic cases in this

sense was the Panther accident, when the Baron corresponded with Nabuco saying “Try to provoke energetic articles from monroists against this insult” (Costa 1968, 232; Telegram from Baron of Rio Branco to Joaquim Nabuco, in Ricupero 2005, 9).

Upon assuming the position of Brazilian ambassador to the United States, Nabuco began to attend the American intellectual circle. Among other activities, he attended lectures at universities and lectured on various subjects, in which international policy issues and possible evidence of his international political thinking came to the fore. In the transcriptions of these speeches it is possible to identify some peculiarities of his Americanism, as will be seen later in this text.

In 1906 the Americanist policy of the Baron had a significant retribution: the III American International Conference was based in Rio de Janeiro. Nabuco came to Rio de Janeiro to preside over the conference and in his company brought the American Secretary of State Elihu Root. Both defended Pan-Americanism, in the sense of a broad and effective continental approach. Another sign that Baron’s Americanist policy was working is that in 1908 the German minister in Brazil informed his superiors that he suspected that the Baron would withdraw from office and be replaced by Nabuco. Informing his superiors in Berlin the German diplomat said that “given the English formation of mister Nabuco, now impregnated with Americanism, this would in no way represent a gain for Germany” (Corrêa 2009, 129).

Nabuco’s health began to deteriorate shortly after an official trip to Havana to attend the restoration of Cuba’s national government in 1909. He died in Washington on January 17, 1910. His body was conducted with exceptional solemnity, to the cemetery of the American capital, and then was transferred to Brazil, on the North Caroline cruiser. From Rio de Janeiro he was transported to Recife, his hometown.

The Americanism of Joaquim Nabuco

America as a separate peace zone

As already mentioned, Nabuco’s first contact with the United States was as an attaché to the Legation in 1876. It was not a good first impression. The US then lived a troubled moment in its domestic politics, and Nabuco then wrought a series of strong criticisms of US policy and politics (Pereira 2005, 9). However, coming to his arrival at the embassy in 1905, he reviewed his ideas about the US as much as he reviewed his ideas about Europe. In

1898 he declared in an interview with the newspaper *Estado de São Paulo* that “we are today one of the many unknowns of a vast problem: the American problem. Europe, Africa, Asia form a single political whole. Faced with this colossal mass, which should be called European, what is the destiny of South America?” (Interview to *O Estado de São Paulo*, 1898, in Nabuco 1929, 403). Specifically, he attempted to find a guideline that would give meaning to his position of rapprochement with the United States, especially the role of the United States in the world, with Roosevelt in charge of foreign policy.

In presenting his credentials in the US, Nabuco already demonstrated an essential feature of his foreign policy thinking: the US as defining the American continent as a zone of peace, in contrast to Europe, a war zone: “All the votes of Brazil are (...) to the increase of the immense moral influence that the United States exert and is translated by the existence in the world for the first time in the history of a vast neutral zone of peace and of free human competition” (Address of presentation of credentials, May 24, 1905, in Ricupero 2005, 6). The same essential characteristic would be emphasized on other occasions. An example: “America, thanks to the Monroe Doctrine, is the Continent of Peace, and this colossal peace-building unit, fundamentally interested in other regions of the Earth – all of the Pacific, to say the least – forms a Neutral Hemisphere and counterbalances the other Hemisphere, that we may very well call the Belligerent Hemisphere” (Nabuco 1911, 146-1470). And yet again: “The beneficent influence of the United States in history is proved by the existence, for the first time, of a large Neutral zone, as is all independent America, inclined to peace, alongside another mass (Europe now formed by control, alliances, etc., a whole with Africa and Asia) inclined to war, real or eminent” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Mr. Hay, June 21, 1905, in Pereira 2005, 13).

As mentioned earlier, Nabuco’s Americanism can be especially deduced from lectures given by him at US universities during his time as ambassador to Washington. An example of what is being said is the lecture entitled “The feeling of nationality in the History of Brazil”, delivered before the Spanish Club of Yale University, May 15, 1908. According to Nabuco, Brazil was able to maintain a large territory thanks to several factors, among them the Monroe Doctrine (Nabuco 1911, 440). According to him, the main characteristic of Brazilian nationality is its idealism, and within this idealism, Americanism, the perception of belonging to a group of countries of the same continent, linked together by something greater than geography (Nabuco 1911, 441). For him, the countries of America have an indissoluble association, the Monroe Doctrine being an example of this (Nabuco 1911, 443).

In another lecture, entitled “The Part of America in Civilization”, given

at the University of Wisconsin on June 20, 1909, Nabuco identifies “keeping the peace” as one of the main contributions of the United States to the History of Civilization. Through the Monroe Doctrine, the US has pressed Europe for peace. In the words of Nabuco, “America, thanks to the Doctrine of Monroe, is the continent of Peace” (Nabuco 1911, 449). Moreover, being a continent of peace, America establishes a balance with “the other hemisphere, which we could call belligerent” (Nabuco 1911, 450). However, Nabuco identifies the cause of wars “on the obstacles to national aggrandizement,” something the United States had not yet experienced (Nabuco 1911, 450). The US thrived unimpeded at the same time when “the progress of civilization” was “to replace War for International Law” (Nabuco 1911, 450). Thus, according to Nabuco, the pacifist sentiment of the United States would be put to the test when they found the first serious obstacle to their national aggrandizement. Only then would the United States go through its profession of faith in favor of Peace (Nabuco 1911, 450). According to Nabuco, the great profession of US faith in favor of peace would be to support Pan Americanism and make it an integral part of the US foreign policy independent of the Monroe Doctrine. Thus, not only would the United States fully identify with peace, but it would also connect the rest of the continent with it, bringing all humanity closer to the time it will deny war. In his words, “for you and for us, the words Peace and Pan-Americanism are convertible” (Nabuco 1911, 450).

Rubens Ricupero agrees that the main characteristic of Joaquim Nabuco’s diplomatic thinking was “the creative elaboration of the concept of a separate system of the Americas, distinct from the European and reserved to be a space of peace and collaboration, in contrast to the aggressive and belligerent essence of the European system at that time” (Ricupero 2005, 6). Similarly, Clodoaldo Bueno interprets Joaquim Nabuco as the Brazilian who most influenced the recognition of America as a distinct continental system with its own international personality (Bueno 2003, 166). In this interpretation Nabuco was accompanied by the Baron: “The truth is that there were only great powers in Europe and today they are the first to recognize that there is in the New World a great and powerful nation to count on (...). The definitions of US foreign policy are made (...) unambiguously, with arrogant frankness, especially when they are aimed at the most powerful governments of Europe, and what happens is that they do not protest or react, but rather welcome the American interventions” (Baron of Rio Branco, dispatch to Washington, 1905, quoted in Pereira 2005, 11). But there was something in Nabuco’s interpretation that surpassed the chancellor’s theory: Americanism not as an option among others, but as the only option of Brazil’s foreign policy: “our rapprochement with the United States is a policy that has (...) the greatest of

all the advantages that any policy can have – that of having no alternatives, that there is nothing that can be given in place of it, nothing that can replace it because the policy of isolation is not an alternative and would not be sufficient for the immense problems that await the future of this country” (Nabuco 1911, 424).

Connection between Americanism and abolitionism

Another characteristic of the Americanism of Joaquim Nabuco is the connection between this and the cause of the abolition of slavery defended previously. According to João Frank da Costa, “the work of approaching the United States and of the full realization of continentalism had (...) for Nabuco, the same importance that was once the capital issue of abolition” (Quoted in Ricupero 2005, 2). In the words of Nabuco himself: “I consider May 24, 1905 [day when he personally delivered to Roosevelt his ambassadorial credentials] as great for our external order as May 13, 1888 [day of the signing of the Lei Áurea] was for our internal order” (Quoted in Costa 1968, 76). And more: “Fate wanted this rest of life (...) to be employed in a cause, a service, which (...) filled the empty space that that great idea had left in my soul. I am referring to the rapprochement between the two great Northern and Southern Republics” (Nabuco in *Gazeta de Notícias*, July 24, 1906, quoted in Ricupero 2005, 2). In other words, Nabuco’s performance in Washington was not disconnected from his thought or from his earlier role as an abolitionist. His role as ambassador was imbued with the same humanitarian liberalism, still inherited from the abolitionist struggle and its unfolding on social issues (Pereira 2005, 9).

Belief in progress

Another characteristic of Nabuco’s international thinking is the belief in progress. He believed that the international system was undergoing a change: the center of power was moving from Europe to America, or more precisely to the United States. The Baron saw the international system more statically: Europe is still a threat, as were the South American neighbors. The US and the Roosevelt Corollary were a compensation for these and other possible threats. In looking at the international system, the Baron did not see a scenario so different from that faced by Brazilian diplomats of the 19th century. Looking at the international system, Nabuco saw a real revolution going on, and regret that his colleague did not accompany him with the correspond-

ing policies (Pereira 2005, 15).

The US as an example for Brazil

Nabuco did not see the US only as a preferential foreign policy option. For him the US was also an example, not only for Brazil, but for all of Latin America: in contact with the United States, it would impregnate itself, to a different extent, of the American “optimism, intrepidity and energy” (Nabuco 1911, 143). Nabuco hoped for the construction of a new Brazilian national identity referred to in American civilization (Pereira 2005, 13). The United States thus appeared also as a friend or model to be followed, representing the anti-imperialist alternative (Cardim and Almino 2002, 424).

In the lecture “The Approach of the Two Americas”, delivered at the University of Chicago on August 28, 1908, Nabuco presents his Americanism even more explicitly. He uses a verb, “to Americanize” and defines it as infiltration of US optimism, self-confidence, and energy in other countries of the continent (Nabuco 1911, 464). According to Nabuco, the countries of Latin America would have much to gain from the example of the United States. The US in turn would win the friendship of Latin Americans. From this, Nabuco imagines an America united in the same moral, the same political system and the same destiny (Nabuco 1911, 467). According to him, in part this dream was already being realized by the Pan American conferences. But alongside these, it was necessary to create “a pan-American public opinion” (Nabuco 1911, 468). He cites examples of the existence of a “world public opinion”, capable of leveling societies to international standards. And if a world public opinion, distant and dispersed, had this power, much more would be able to do “a united American opinion” (Nabuco 1911, 469).

In the same lecture Nabuco also focuses on what can be described as a positive aspect of the Monroe Doctrine: instead of presenting it only negatively as a defense of US interests against Europe, he presents it as “an American instinct”, “an intuition that this new world was born with a unified destiny” (Nabuco 1911, 466). According to Nabuco, the two Americas, the Anglo-Saxon and the Luso-Hispanic, kept apart from each other for too long. On the part of Latin America, the reason for this isolation was the fear of having closer contact with the United States, “in view of the great difference between the power of this country and that of all other American republics” (Nabuco 1911, 463). “For its part, the United States, being a world in itself, and a world that grows more and more rapidly, opposed to any movement in this sense the strongest of resistances – that of indifference” (Nabuco 1911, 463-464). According to

Nabuco, Brazil, for its part, was a special case: it always had a disposition favorable to the approach with the USA. According to him, Brazil never had reason to deviate from the spirit of this proposal, nor has it ever experienced any disappointment on the part of the United States. Thus, “it could not happen to Brazil that other countries had reasons, not to adopt the route followed by us since independence” (Nabuco 1911, 464), especially because he believed that the United States, with its high civilization, could not hurt any nation (Nabuco 1911, 464). In conclusion, Nabuco expresses his desire to see an America that tolerates diversity, and also to “see all the states of the two Americas know each other, love each other and communion as members of a single family among the nations” (Nabuco 1911, 470).

Nabuco and the Brazilian Liberal Party

Nabuco was not isolated in his opinions: he was a representative of a group of Brazilians who believed that the United States was the great Brazilian partner of the moment, a group that included (with more or less optimism) individuals like Machado de Assis, Euclides da Cunha, Oliveira Lima, Domício da Gama, Silvio Romero, José Veríssimo, Salvador de Mendonça, Graça Aranha and Rui Barbosa (Pereira 2005, 1-2). But it was not just that. These individuals, and mainly Nabuco, only culminated a tendency that came from the monarchy. Since before its independence, Brazil had individuals who saw the USA at the same time as an example and as an ideal international partner. Nabuco himself mentions Aureliano Candido Tavares Bastos, an important Brazilian deputy in the 1860s, as one of his “precursors, preparers of the way, sowers of ideas” (Nabuco 1897, Book 3, 238).

The most Americanist tendency of Brazilian politics in general was confused with the Liberal Party (Vianna 1991), of which Nabuco was a member, following in his father’s footsteps. This party had a reformist character, and defended a federative monarchy, more decentralized than the Conservative Party considered ideal. However, when the republic was proclaimed, Nabuco was critical of the new regime (Nabuco 1999). He was a reformer, but he was also a monarchist: he oscillated between reformism and conservatism, freedom and order, nation and citizenship (Salles 2002, 27-28). Eventually Nabuco made peace with the new regime, but at first he feared that it was precisely to deprive the country of the liberties achieved in the last years of monarchy.

The members of the Liberal Party were nicknamed “luzias” by their Conservative opponents in allusion to Santa Luzia, a city in the state of Minas

Gerais. There, in 1842 the Liberals organized a resistance movement to the Conservatives, who had seized power in the country. The Liberals were defeated by military forces sent by the Conservatives, and ended with this nickname. Ironically, Luzia comes from the verb *luzir*, to produce light. Nabuco hoped that the US would be a light for the American continent, and that the American continent would be a light for the world on international relations.

Moments of skepticism

Despite all optimism, Joaquim Nabuco's Americanism was not idealistic, utopian, or naive. Vices of American society and foreign policy were not hidden from him. Regarding foreign policy, João Frank da Costa observes that "Nabuco does not approve the American policy of intervening in Central America [but did not think that such a fact would] prevent (...) the strengthening of relations between Brazil and the United States". In a letter to the Baron, Nabuco himself said: "Note that I do not follow Mr. Roosevelt's ideas of American occupation (...) of South American countries. My monroism is broader and does not bind me to such expedients as he imagines to 'justify' (...) the doctrine of Monroe (sic) before Europe" (Costa 1968, 203).

As for American society, Nabuco wrote critically in his diary on August 6, 1909: "The greatest of the national games here is to pile dollars (for men) and spend them (for women). Dollar-heaping and dollar-squandering, I can call them. After that, hit the blacks. Just yesterday a white minister escaped being attacked by the mob for having squeezed the hand of a black colleague. A senator, who slapped a servant of color, told the judge: "I did not strike a man, but a negro (sic)". They designate a woman of color in a document of justice: "A female of the genus *africanus* (sic)" (Diaries, volume 2, 460, quoted in Ricupero 2005, 10). Nabuco was so shocked that he even came to the conclusion that the US would eventually exile all the country's blacks (Ricupero 2005, 12).

However, as Rubens Ricupero observes, lucidity and moral condemnation in such commentaries coexisted with deep realism. This can be seen in Nabuco's comments about the anti-American reaction aroused by the Hague Conference: "Defeating the United States is a foolish glory for any nation. God, let there be prudence in our press, clairvoyance among our public men. There is a lot that irritates, spoils and annoys us on the part of the United States, but we must understand that our only foreign policy is to win their friendship. There is no country to which it is more dangerous to give pinpricks, even those of the press" (Diaries, volume 2, 409, annotation of September 4, 1907,

quoted in Ricupero 2005, 12-13). Still about The Hague, and the anti-American sentiment awakened there, Nabuco wrote in his diary: “One does not get big for jumping. The only way to look big is by being it. Japan did not need to ask that they recognize it as a great power, since it proved to be so” (Diaries, annotation on August 25, 1907, quoted in Ricupero 2005, 8). This note also serves to demonstrate that Nabuco’s foreign policy program was feasible because it coincided with the interest and the notorious position of the United States. It was not aimed at utopian (or unrealistic) goals, like to obtain for Brazil in the world the recognition of power status above its real possibilities. It was a strictly defensive and moderate program (Ricupero 2005, 7-8).

Criticism from Oliveira Lima and differences with the Baron

While the Baron and Nabuco worked for the rapprochement between Brazil and the United States, making a positive reading of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, opposition began to emerge. Oliveira Lima is an important example of this counterpoint for the Baron and especially for Joaquim Nabuco (Lima 1907, 11). Putting in general lines, Oliveira Lima saw the US and especially Theodore Roosevelt with suspicion. He believed that instead of alignment with the US, Brazil should seek closer ties with Latin American countries, precisely to counterbalance US influence on the continent (Lima 1907, 10). Oliveira Lima openly criticized Joaquim Nabuco for interpreting US foreign policy in another way, taking Brazil closer to the US, a position that contrasted with the “Spanish republics of South America” (nominally Chile and Argentina), which adopted more cautious positions in relation to the Americans (Lima 1907, 41-42). According to Oliveira Lima, Nabuco in Washington had become “too American, as in London he was too British, in Italy too Roman and in France he would be too French” (Lima 1937, 212).

Another opponent of Nabuco was the Baron himself. Nabuco did not see his role in the embassy as Rio Branco’s project. In his words, he saw himself “called to create this role” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Graça Aranha, February 2, 1905, in Nabuco 1949, volume 2, 207). In the words of Luis Viana Filho, the ambassador intended to “play his own game” (Viana Filho 1952, 299). In 1906, when Rio Branco was invited by the new president Afonso Pena to continue as minister, Nabuco wrote congratulating him, but also seeking to guarantee this autonomy: “I see you will be the minister. For the country I esteem, for you are a force at its service (...) for me in the part that is direct to me, I congratulate myself, for you will not distrust me and you will give me freedom of action, without which I can do nothing for the American friendship” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rio Branco, December 10, 1906,

quoted in Pereira 2005, 7).

Nabuco was indeed concerned with the autonomy he received from the Baron. Writing to his friend Graça Aranha, he said, “Rio Branco, this one, does not write to me or tell me anything, so that I cannot conjecture anything about his plans and thinking” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Graça Aranha, June 21, 1905, in Nabuco 1949, volume 2, 219, also quoted in Pereira 2005, 8). To be sure, all the time he was at the embassy, Nabuco complained about the Baron’s lack of correspondence (Letters from Joaquim Nabuco to Graça Aranha from June 21, 1905, February 2, 1906 and November 12, 1908 and letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Cardoso de Oliveira from October 22, 1909, all cited in Pereira 2005, 8), even wishing for a retirement because of that (Confidential letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Hilário de Gouvêa, from the Brazilian Embassy, Washington, D.C., on January, 19, 1909, in Nabuco 1949, 329-330). Paradoxically, this lack of instructions only reinforced the autonomous character that Nabuco understood that his mission should have, and accentuated the differences between the ambassador and the chancellor. In addition, Nabuco’s “advertising” profile eventually transformed his individual initiatives into official politics. He gave a more drastic tone to the ideas of Rio Branco regarding the relationship with the United States, encouraging what he called an “almost alliance” or, at least, seeking the international system to perceive the relationship of the two countries as such (Pereira 2005, 8).

A difference between the ambassador and the minister can be observed in a letter from Nabuco to President Rodrigues Alves. In this he affirmed that it would be essential to achieve a strong and *exclusive* [my emphasis] proximity to the United States, in order to guarantee security and stability for Brazil (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rodrigues Alves, July 16, 1908, cited in Pereira 2005, 13). This exclusivity would be favored by historical factors, since Brazil had demonstrated on several occasions an identification with the ideal of American solidarity (Nabuco 1911, 133). According to him, “the rapprochement between the two countries [is] our *only possible* foreign policy. It is worth more to me than any Dreadnought we can build (...) Without it, our isolation would be worthless” (Reserved letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Ilanir da Silveira, October 31, 1908 – emphasis in the original –, quoted in Pereira 2005, 14). In the same vein, writing to his friend Hilário de Gouvêa, Nabuco pointed out the differences with the Baron: “he trusts in Germany, France, England, Chile, Argentina, I do not know who else, and I only trust the United States” (Confidential letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Hilário de Gouvêa, from the Brazilian Embassy, Washington, D.C., on January, 19, 1909, in Nabuco 1949, 329-330).

This difference in the Americanisms of the Baron and Nabuco (priority in one case, exclusivity in the other) was present mainly when the Baron

leaned toward a pact with Argentina and Chile, the Pact of ABC, a project to be pursued in parallel with the approach with the USA. According to the Baron, there was no reason “for the three main nations of South America – Brazil, Chile and Argentina – [to bother] with the language of President Roosevelt (...) no one can say with justice that they are in the number of unruly or turbulent nations that do not know how to make good use of their independence” (Baron of Rio Branco to Gomes Ferreira, reserved dispatch for Washington, January 31, 1905, quoted in Pereira 2005, 5). That is: the Baron understood that Argentina, Chile and Brazil formed a special group in South America, with a differentiated relationship with the United States. Nabuco did not necessarily disagree with this, but vehemently opposed the alliance proposed by the chancellor. Unlike the Baron, he did not trust the South American countries, and wanted exclusivity with the US: “Our friend [the Baron] came to think of replacing the North American axis of our foreign policy with the Argentine-Chilean axis, and I had to ask to the President and to him to dismiss me from this position in such a case, to frustrate at the outset this unhappy policy of ABC” (Confidential letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Hilário de Gouvêa, from the Brazilian Embassy, Washington, D.C., on January, 19, 1909, in Nabuco 1949, 329-330).

Another difference between Nabuco and Rio Branco was the duration of Americanism: while the Baron gave signs of adopting Americanism in a contingent and temporary manner, the ambassador in Washington indicated a much longer project. The entente between the two countries (as Nabuco called it) could only be created “here and there, being prepared long in advance by efforts like mine” (Reserved letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Ilanir da Silveira, October 31, 1908, quoted in Pereira 2005, 14). Nabuco feared that in time monroism might lose its strength, and “in that day poor us, if our friendship is not well cemented” (Confidential Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Barbosa Lima, July 7, 1907, quoted in Pereira, 2005, 14, also available in Nabuco 1949, 277). It was necessary to seize it while American foreign policy was conducted by Theodore Roosevelt and Elihu Root, individuals who were in favor of coming closer to Brazil (Confidential letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Hilário de Gouvêa, from the Brazilian Embassy, Washington, D.C., on January, 19, 1909, in Nabuco 1949, 329-330). Specifically, Nabuco feared that the Baron would be pleased with a much more modest approach to the United States. In this sense, the ambassador complained to his friend and confidant Graça Aranha that the Baron showed “to ignore the march of the world and not to have the instinct of our own conservation” (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Graça Aranha, September 28, 1908, in Nabuco 1949, 315).

Although Nabuco’s Americanism was not exactly the same as Baron’s,

they both agreed on criticisms of certain aspects of Roosevelt's foreign policy. Addressing Rio Branco, in a letter already quoted here, Nabuco said: "Note that I do not follow Mr. Roosevelt's ideas about the American occupation, or otherwise, of customs, etc., of South American countries. My monroism is broader and does not bind me to those expedients" (Letter from Joaquim Nabuco to Rio Branco, December 19, 1905, quoted in Pereira 2005, 15, also available in Nabuco 1949, volume 2, 238). In short, if there were differences of opinion between the two, there were also important similarities with respect to international relations. According to Rubens Ricupero "The ambassador in Washington in particular has always been [more] capable of theorizing and conceptualizing than the chancellor" (Ricupero 2005, 5). Citing the same author, "Nabuco's personality was certainly more attracted to general ideas, more strongly imbued with poetry and religious sentiment than that of the Baron and his generous and romantic nature overflowed with eventual excesses of emphasis or confidence" (Ricupero 2005, 12). Be that as it may, the "excesses" of Nabuco's Americanism were largely contained by Rio Branco (Pereira 2005, 17), and despite occasional differences, the two were in tune in fundamental points and even used the same words to express this convergence (Ricupero 2005, 13).

Conclusion

After a successful life as abolitionist and intellectual, Joaquim Nabuco was summoned by the Baron of Rio Branco to be the first ambassador of Brazil in Washington. Following independent paths, the two reached a similar conclusion: European imperialism was a threat to Brazil, and the best defense was friendship with the United States. But the ambassador was not merely a follower of the chancellor's orders: Nabuco had his own convictions about how Brazil's Americanist policy should be implemented. And that is where differences between Nabuco and the Baron can be observed: they could agree on something essential, but they disagreed on points that were not accidental.

In addition to seeing US as a protection against European imperialism, Nabuco believed that by supporting US leadership on the continent, Brazil could help transform America into a zone of peace, in contrast to the internal belligerence of Europe. In other words, Nabuco believed in the possibility of creating an entirely new type of international relations. This perspective was not divorced from his past as an abolitionist, intellectual and a member of the Liberal Party. Nabuco believed in great ideas, and especially believed in progress: by carrying ideals to reality it would be possible to build a future different from the past. In this sense he saw the USA as a light, a beacon guiding

the continent. Brazil should not only seek diplomatic rapprochement with the United States, but also follow its example in internal transformations.

The Baron gave signs of adopting Americanism for a shorter period of time, more circumstantially. Nabuco gave signs of seeking a long-term project, wanting to change circumstances. Although the Baron and Nabuco were not diametrically opposed, their differences should not be ignored. They were engaged in a debate of political thought: the Baron was a conservative, skeptical of substantial changes. Nabuco was a liberal, seeking to transform reality through his ideals.

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ABSTRACT

Throughout the 19th century, Brazil and the United States had little intense bilateral relations. This picture changed when the Baron of Rio Branco decided that his country should privilege relations with the United States. As part of his plan the Baron named Joaquim Nabuco as Brazil's first ambassador to Washington. However, Nabuco had an Americanism distinct from that of the Baron. He believed in the possibility of transforming the American continent into a zone of peace. This Americanism was linked to Nabuco's liberal world view, already evident in his struggle against slavery and in his pre-diplomatic intellectual trajectory.

KEYWORDS

Joaquim Nabuco; Brazil-United States Relations; Brazilian Political Thought.

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