

## **XLVI International Congress of Military History**

**Athens, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

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**Theme:** Portugal in the Peninsular War: a War for the “Maintenance” of Independence

**Time and Place:** 14h00-15h30, Working Session VII (ZEUS Hall)

Dear Miloslav ČAPLOVIČ, moderator of this working session and director of the Slovak Military Historical Institute.

Dear Board Members, Niels Bo POULSEN (Director of the Department of Military History and War Studies at the Royal Danish Defense College) and Pasi TUUNAINEN (Professor in the History of the Art of War at the Finnish National Defense University).

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Portugal has been an independent country since 1143, with one of the oldest borders in the world, defined in 1297 and, unlike the vast majority of European countries, it has never lost its independence.

To address the theme of this Congress, the wars of independence since the 18th century, I chose the Peninsular War, since it was the situation in which Portugal was closest to losing its independence. It then fought for the “maintenance” of independence, as a result of the strategic option to transfer the capital and the kingdom from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro, which then ensured formal independence, even considering the three Napoleonic invasions of the mainland national territory. It is a unique situation, which we intend to highlight here, taking into account the national strategic option for two theaters of operations:

- the first in Brazil, essentially political, diplomatic and economic, following the strategic option of moving the capital and the kingdom to Brazil;
- and the second, on the continent, essentially military, following the battles and combats waged against the French, with the support of England, the

strategic ally, which guaranteed the sovereignty and maintenance of the integrity of the Empire.

In this study, we link the two theaters of operations within a global strategy, which includes different general strategies (political, diplomatic, economic and military), coordinated by the English and the Portuguese, and based on Portuguese and Brazilian schools.

The methodology adopted for the base text of this communication includes the strategic analysis of Portugal in the period between 1807 and 1814, based on the means-objectives-threats trilogy and in a perspective centered on potentials and vulnerabilities and influenced by the internal and external environment. The organization includes:

- a framework, where we generically characterize the national and international environment;
- a strategic analysis of the first theater of operations, related to Brazil and following the transfer of the capital and the kingdom from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro;
- a strategic analysis of the continent's theatre, essentially military, and resulting essentially from the three French invasions;
- and some final considerations, which reflect the reasons for the success of the national strategic option, in a unique situation in history, which allowed Portugal to guarantee independence, despite the destruction of its lands and the killing of its people.

### **Let's start with the Framework.**

The French Revolution of 1789 was one of the most important milestones in the history of humanity. The trial, death sentence and execution of Louis XVI on January 21, 1793 increased the distrust of the European powers and led to the strengthening of the anti-French coalition. As early as 1793, Spain declared war on France and Portugal would participate, with an Auxiliary Army to the Crown of Spain, in the so-called Campaign of Roussillon and Catalonia until 1795, alongside the Spanish and with the support of the English, against revolutionary France. At the end of the war, the victorious French Republic was even recognized by Spain, which later, in 1801, invaded Portugal in the so-called War of the Oranges.

After the Amiens treaty and Napoleon's initial great victories, from Austerlitz to Jena, France could not militarily dominate England, the real maritime power. That was how Napoleon chose to isolate and economically asphyxiate England, through the so-called "Continental Blockade" (Berlin decree of November 21, 1806), which prohibited access to ports in countries dominated by the French Empire for ships from England and Ireland. For France, the ports of the empires of Portugal, Austria and Russia were very important, as well as the dominance of the navies of Portugal and Denmark.

In this international environment, the "Portugal dilemma" was once again placed in geostrategic terms, given that the Portuguese land border coincided with the border between the maritime (England) and continental (France) powers, highlighting three factors influencing the strategic options: the maritime position of Portugal; the overseas domains; and Spain as the only neighbor.

Traditionally, Portugal opted for maritime power in an extreme situation, in order to maintain its overseas domains and protect itself from its Spanish neighbor. On the other hand, for England it was essential to use the Portuguese territorial nucleus and the adjacent islands (Madeira and Azores) for the development of its global strategy to combat the continental power.

In Portugal, the prince regent, D. João (future D. João VI), was pressured daily by the French and English intellectual sectors. Like the country in general, the Prince was divided.

Despite successive attempts by Portugal to maintain neutrality, in August 1807, Napoleon sent an ultimatum to the Prince Regent of Portugal: either Portugal would break relations with England by September 1<sup>st</sup> or it would be invaded by French troops. This would happen soon, after the secret treaty of Fontainebleau, signed on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1807, between Spain and France, through which the two countries undertook to conquer Portugal, whose territory would be divided into three kingdoms.

Meanwhile, England offered protection to the Portuguese royal family, having pressured D. João to embark for Brazil, in order to keep Portugal independent and to guarantee continuity and even the strengthening of commercial relations from the colonies.

## **Now let's look at Brazil's theater of operations**

D. João's option was then to move the capital and the kingdom to Brazil, with the support of England, having given orders for the constitution of a Regency Council and so that resistance was not offered to the French, in a way to safeguard the Portuguese people and lands. This unique strategic option, which took some 10,000 people on 40 ships to Brazil on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 1807, under British escort, would safeguard national independence, but would not protect Portugal from a fratricidal war.

Napoleon's immediate response initiated the Peninsular War, with the invasion and occupation of Portugal by the French and Spanish armies by around 28,000 men and under the command of Jean-Andoche Junot. This first invasion would be followed by another two invasions, in a war that would last until Napoleon's defeat by the sixth coalition in 1814.

At that time, when the “New World” had never before seen a king, Portugal's economic base was Brazil, as between half and two thirds of the Portuguese state's revenues came from the trade that linked Brazil to Europe. Losing Brazil would be the same as losing almost everything.

On the other hand, in the theater of operations in Brazil, D. João's concern was to consolidate the integrity of the territory, both in the South against the Spanish (Rio da Prata) and in the North against the French (invasion of French Guiana, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 1809). And this strategy was clearly offensive, taking advantage of the collapse of Spanish power to obtain Brazil's long-term territorial objectives in areas disputed since the 16th century. On the other hand, it dismantled the contagion of independence revolts, supported, directly and indirectly, by England, and managed to unite Brazil around it.

Thus, we can underline that the main advantages of the Brazil option for Portugal were: maintain national sovereignty and Portugal's independence; preserve the Portuguese fleet from falling into French hands; facilitate the “defense” of Portugal by British troops; and open the ports of Brazil to trade (more advantages for England).

The departure of the royal family to Brazil meant the continuation of Portuguese sovereignty, which represented a defeat for Napoleon. From Bahia and then from Rio de Janeiro, the Prince Regent ordered, shortly after his arrival, the opening of the South American ports to British navigation

and trade, as well as the declaration of war on France (on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1808). With these concessions, Portugal suffered a profound blow to its commerce. A serious economic depression arose in the country, alongside with some sort of economic emancipation of Brazil.

### **And the fighting on the continent?**

Shortly after the departure of the royal family for Brazil, French and Spanish troops entered Lisbon, under the command of Junot, without encountering resistance. The military conquest of Portugal was concluded and would be followed by the disarmament of the kingdom.

After the formal annexation and dissolution of the Council of Regency, and after several episodes of repression and violence perpetrated by French troops, a revolutionary junta arose in several cities. The junta hunted the invaders and gathered large bands of armed civilians, who in mountains and valleys in the north made it difficult for the French columns to maneuver.

Soon after, in August 1808, an English army landed at the mouth of the Mondego, under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley (later Duke of Wellington), which would succeed in expelling the French, after defeating them in the battles of Roliça and Vimeiro, always with the indispensable help of the Portuguese resistance. On March 7<sup>th</sup>, 1809, the Prince Regent appointed the Englishman Beresford as Marshal General and Commander-in-Chief of the Portuguese Army. He reorganized the army, introducing tactical innovations and discipline – and ruled the country on the continent, practically until 1820.

Mainland Portugal constituted a very important theater of operations for England, which would continue to support the Portuguese forces during the two invasions that followed: in 1809, under the command of Soult (by Chaves – it lasted only four months); and in 1810, under the command of André Massena (via Beira Alta and which would stop at the Linhas de Torres). In any of the invasions, but especially in Massena, the role of irregular warfare, unleashed by the populations, was decisive for the victory, although it was not always recognized.

In this regard, we agree with the thesis of Professor António José Telo (2016, pp. 656-662), from which we highlight:

- British action concentrated on reorganizing the first-line army (the Portuguese Armada was in Brazil and England did not need it in Europe);

- the reorganization of 1808-1809 created three very distinct forces, although the British only highlighted the first, related to the first-line army, armed, trained and commanded by it, which reached 60,000 men in 1813; the second force was formed by militias and ordinances, as reserve of the first line, as a territorial defense force and an irregular or guerrilla action force – directed, trained and armed by the Portuguese and with more than 200 thousand men; and the third force formed by the populations displaced by the scorched earth policy, who “are engaged in a guerrilla action without barracks and without rules against the invaders”;

- it was the joint action of the three forces, even without real coordination between them, that created hell for the French invader.

**In conclusion, and considering the limited time for our intervention, we can highlight six important points, namely:**

1. In this Global War, between England and France for the conquest of World Power, the Peninsula in general and Portugal in particular constituted a decisive instrument of the British global strategy in the sense of weakening and defeating France.

2. Portugal actively participated in the so-called Peninsular War, fundamentally in two theaters of operations:

- that of Brazil, materialized by the courageous transfer of the capital and the kingdom from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro, with greater weight in terms of general political, diplomatic and economic strategies;

- and that of the continent, with a determining weight of the general military strategy, materialized in the combats of the Anglo-Portuguese forces in the face of the three French invasions of 1807, 1809 and 1810.

3. At the level of general strategies:

- politics was related to the options associated with maintaining independence, such as the transfer of the capital and the crown to Brazil and the management of internal struggles, including between the king and his Spanish wife;

- the diplomatic was dominated by the management of the relationship with England;

- the economic was dominated by commercial concessions to England, from the Brazilian ports, which would lead Portugal to go from an always positive trade balance to one that was always negative, with the consequent fall of Portugal's relative power in economic terms;

- and the military, in which Portugal, with the support of England, transformed its army, which, guided by British military strategy, managed to defend the borders and impose its form of war on the enemy, determined by the brilliant way in which regular action was combined with the irregular and with the naval power.

4. The two theaters of operations were thus part of a global strategy, in which the different general strategies (political, diplomatic, economic and military) were properly coordinated, despite the constraints arising from the distance between Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro.

5. As a result of this concerted effort, the maintenance of independence and the consolidation of borders in Europe and South America were ensured despite the disastrous consequences in economic and social terms for the Portugal that won the Congress of Vienna.

6. At the end of the War, and despite the success of the English and Portuguese global strategy, Portugal was a ruined State, with a monarchy affected by the Brazilian option of D. João (which turned Portugal into a colony of Brazil) and with the indignation of a suffering population dominated by the British (who would be used in successive revolutions in the future).

In conclusion, Portugal's participation in the Peninsular War was a success within the scope of a Global Strategy, which would ensure, through the coordination between the different general strategies, materialized in two theaters of operations, and with high human losses, the main political national objective: the maintenance of Portugal's independence.

Thank you for your attention.

## Abstract

At the beginning of the Peninsular War, right after Napoleon had decreed the Continental Blockade and invaded Portugal for the first time, in November 1807, Prince Regent D. João opted to transfer the capital and kingdom from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro. This strategic option of a global nature was framed, encouraged and supported by England, and it had decisive political, diplomatic and economic determinants as well as a military component, which included battles and combats against two other French invasions (1809 and 1810). These were marked by “the brilliant way in which regular action was combined with irregular action and naval power”.

The Peninsular War was framed by a global war between the maritime and continental powers and determined by the strategic option of transferring the capital and the kingdom to Brazil within the scope of a global strategic action, which involved the due coordination between the different general strategies. This war, which took place in two theaters of operations (Brazil and mainland), would consume many lives and national goods, but would be successful in maintaining a never-lost independence and in consolidating the Portuguese borders in Europe and South America.

## 1. Introduction

Portugal has been an independent country since October 5, 1143 (Treaty of Zamora), with one of the oldest borders in the world, defined on September 12, 1297 (Treaty of Alcanizes).

The situation in which Portugal came closest to losing independence was in the so-called Peninsular War<sup>3</sup>, in which it fought for the “maintenance” of independence, as a result of the strategic option to transfer the capital and the kingdom, from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro, which then assured formal independence, even considering the three Napoleonic invasions of the mainland national territory. It is a unique situation, which we intend to highlight here, taking into account the national strategic option for two theaters of operations<sup>4</sup>: the first in Brazil, essentially political, diplomatic and economic,

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<sup>1</sup> Text related to the communication presented by the author on August 31, 2021, in the context of the XLVI International Congress of Military History, which took place in Athens, under the general theme “Independence Wars since the XVIII Century”. We are grateful for the comments of Professor António José Telo, cited as (Telo, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> Major-General (PhD), President of the Portuguese Commission of Military History.

<sup>3</sup> This expression, used by the British, was adopted by Portuguese historiography, as Portugal did not lose its independence (despite having been invaded three times), unlike Spain and other European countries, which use the expressions “War of Independence” or “Napoleonic Wars”.

<sup>4</sup> It could be considered a third theater of operations, which would include the remaining Portuguese possessions at the time, however, these did not have sufficient relative weight in terms of general political, diplomatic, economic and military strategies.

following the strategic option of moving the capital and the kingdom to Brazil; and a second, on the continent, essentially military, following the battles and combats against the French (and at the end of the war, in Spain and France), with the support of England, the strategic ally, which guaranteed the sovereignty and maintenance of the integrity of the Empire (in a first phase – as it promoted the independence of the Americas). This national specificity would guarantee the maintenance of Portugal's independence throughout the Napoleonic period. It would also contribute to the consolidation of borders in Europe and South America and to the fact that, in 1822, at the time of Brazil's independence, the Portuguese prince (of the colonizing power!) would become the first emperor of the new country.

The transfer of the capital and the royal family to Brazil and the battles and combats that took place in mainland Portugal are treated, by most historians, separately and even with few links between Brazilian and Portuguese historians. In this study, we link the two theaters of operations within a global strategy, which includes different general strategies (political, diplomatic, economic and military), coordinated by the English and Portuguese, and based on Portuguese and Brazilian schools.

The methodology thus involves the strategic analysis of Portugal in the period between 1807 and 1814, based on the means-goals-threats trilogy and on a perspective centered on potentials and vulnerabilities and influenced by the environment (internal and external). Thus, we start with a framework, where we very generically characterize the national and international environment and where we highlight the main Portuguese strategic options. This is followed by a strategic analysis of the first theater of operations, regarding Brazil and due to the transfer of the capital and the kingdom from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro. In the next chapter, and very briefly (without the traditional details of battles and combats), we will make a strategic analysis of the continent's theater, essentially military, whether in the context of the three invasions, or in the invasion of Spain and France, already in the final phase of the Napoleonic Wars. Finally, we include some final considerations, which reflect the reasons for the success of the national strategic option, in a unique situation in history, which allowed Portugal to guarantee independence, despite the destruction of its lands and the killing of its people.

## **2. National and international environment**

The French Revolution of 1789 was one of the most important milestones in the history of humanity. The trial, death sentence and execution of Louis XVI on January 21, 1793 increased the distrust of the European powers and led to the strengthening of the anti-French coalition. As early as 1793, Spain declared war on France and Portugal would actively participate (with an Auxiliary Army to the Crown of Spain) in the so-called Campaign in Roussillon and Catalonia until 1795, alongside the Spanish and with the support of the English, against revolutionary France. At the end of the war, the victorious

French republic was even recognized by Spain<sup>5</sup>, which later, in 1801, invaded Portugal in the so-called War of the Oranges<sup>6</sup>. Despite the Amiens treaty, signed between France and England in 1802, war returned in May 1803 and since then, until 1814, France was permanently at war, seeking to dominate Europe through an expansionist policy.

Despite Napoleon's great initial victories, from Austerlitz to Jena, France could not militarily dominate England, the real maritime power. That was how Napoleon chose to isolate and economically asphyxiate England, through the so-called "Continental Blockade" (Berlin decree of November 21, 1806), which prohibited access to ports in countries dominated by the French Empire for ships from England and Ireland<sup>7</sup>. For France, the ports of the empires of Portugal, Austria and Russia were very important, as well as the dominance of the navies of Portugal and Denmark.

In this international environment, the "Portugal dilemma" was once again placed in geostrategic terms, given that the Portuguese land border coincided with the border between the maritime (England) and continental (France) powers, highlighting three factors influencing the strategic options: the maritime position of Portugal; the overseas domains; and Spain as the only neighbor.

Traditionally (at least since the Methuen treaty on December 27, 1703), Portugal opted for a maritime power in an extreme situation, in order to maintain its overseas domains and protect itself from its Spanish neighbor. On the other hand, for England it was essential to use the Portuguese territorial nucleus and the adjacent islands (Madeira and Azores) for the development of its global strategy to combat the continental power.

In Portugal, Queen D. Maria I was ill (an incurable mental illness) and the Prince Regent, D. João (future D. João VI)<sup>8</sup>, was pressured daily by the French and English intellectual sectors. Like the country in general, the Prince was divided.

Despite successive attempts by Portugal to maintain neutrality, in August 1807 (shortly after the Tilsit treaties)<sup>9</sup>, Napoleon sent an ultimatum to the Prince Regent of Portugal: either Portugal would break relations with England by September 1st, or it would be invaded by the French troops.

However, on October 27, 1807, the Spanish prime minister, Manuel de Godoy, signed the (secret) Treaty of Fontainebleau with France, whereby the two countries undertook to conquer Portugal, whose territory would be divided into three kingdoms. Under the

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<sup>5</sup> Spain and France ended hostilities with the signing of the Treaty of Basel on July 22, 1795, which was not known to the Portuguese government, which was immediately pressured to abandon its alliance with England.

<sup>6</sup> War of short duration, which led to the loss of Olivença.

<sup>7</sup> Ports would be closed, goods would be seized, and British merchants would be arrested.

<sup>8</sup> The coronation as King D. João VI would take place in Brazil (a European monarch had never been crowned in America) on February 6, 1818, about a year after the death of D. Maria I.

<sup>9</sup> Signed between the 7th and 9th of July – which confirmed France's control over central and eastern Europe.

pretext of reinforcing the Franco-Spanish army to occupy Portugal, French troops entered Spain, after Napoleon had invited Carlos of Spain and his son Fernando to Paris.

In an utter dilemma, England offered protection to the Portuguese royal family, having pressured D. João to embark for Brazil, in order to keep Portugal independent and to guarantee the continuity and even the strengthening of commercial relationships from the colonies.

D. João's option<sup>10</sup> was then to move the capital and the kingdom to Brazil, with the support of England, having given orders for the constitution of a Regency Council<sup>11</sup> and so that resistance was not offered to the French in order to safeguard the Portuguese people and lands. This strategic option would safeguard national independence, but would not protect Portugal from a fratricidal war.

Napoleon's immediate response gave rise to the beginning of the Peninsular War, with the invasion and occupation of Portugal by the French and Spanish armies, with about 28,000 men and under the command of Jean-Andoche Junot<sup>12</sup>. Napoleon “considered that Portugal would only constitute a secure support for the effectiveness of the Blockade when it was militarily occupied” (Macedo, 1978, p. 351). This first invasion would be followed by another two, in a war that would last until Napoleon's defeat by the sixth coalition in 1814.

In Brazil's theater of operations, D. João's concern with consolidating the integrity of the territory was important, both in the South against the Spaniards (Rio da Prata and Sacramento – taking advantage of the collapse of the Spanish administration), and in the North against the French (with the invasion of French Guiana on January 12, 1809). And this strategy was clearly offensive, taking advantage of the collapse of Spanish power to obtain Brazil's long-term territorial objectives in areas disputed since the 16th century. On the other hand, it dismantled the contagion of independence revolts (supported directly and indirectly by England) and managed to unite Brazil around it, making Brazilians feel that it defended their interests, in a posture in which domestic policy dominated foreign policy (Telo, 2021).

Napoleon's decisive defeat would take place at the Battle of Waterloo, against the Anglo-Prussian army, commanded by the Duke of Wellington (June 1815), followed by

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<sup>10</sup> Framed by the convention of October 22, 1807, which also provided for the temporary occupation of Madeira by the British (which would happen later).

<sup>11</sup> Chaired by the Marquis de Abrantes, D. Pedro de Sá and Meneses, and appointed three days before the royal family's departure for Brazil. This Council of Regency governed the country between 29 November 1807 and 1 February 1808, when it was extinguished by Junot. After the expulsion of the French, on September 15, 1808, it was re-established, but with some changes in its constitution (with emphasis on the work developed by D. Miguel Pereira Forjaz).

<sup>12</sup> Theoretically and following the restructuring of the army, carried out by the decree of May 19, 1806 by the minister António de Araújo de Azevedo, Portugal would have an armed force with about 42,000 line troops, to which 40,000 militiamen were added and 30,000 of ordinances. But most units were only half full, and the militias had not received instruction! (Barata, 2003, p. 42).

the Congress of Vienna, which then established a new “European concert” based on dynastic legitimacy and in the balance of power.

The English victory, based on a global strategy that included several general strategies, had a real exemplary model in Portugal, whether in the economic component, through the opening of Brazilian ports, or in the military component, in which the Portuguese continent was used as a bridgehead to reach, weaken and divide the Napoleonic forces. Portugal contributed considerably to strengthen the English potential and to global victory, without losing its independence to France, but considerably increasing its dependence on England.

### **3. Transferring the capital and the kingdom from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro**

The decision to transfer the capital and the kingdom from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro (or even to the Azores) had already been considered in other troubled periods in the History of Portugal.

In the context of the predictable invasion of France, the Prince Regent's decision to transfer the capital and the kingdom to Brazil was carefully analyzed in terms of its consequences for Portugal and England, which defended, supported and financed it.

At that time, Portugal's economic base was Brazil; it produced most of the Crown's income; it determined the arrival of foreign ships to Lisbon; it determined the existence of a network of international connections; it made currency abundant and stable; it allowed the existence of trade surplus; and it allowed investments in different areas, such as property and art and culture manifestations (Viana, 1996, p. 165).

For Rui Ramos (2010, p. 441) “between half and two-thirds of the state's revenues came from the trade that linked Brazil to Europe. Losing Brazil would be losing almost everything. On the other hand, "it was impossible to trust someone [Napoleon] who, in the rest of Europe, had already deposed many monarchs and taken over their States.”

Thus, we can underline that the main advantages of the Brazil option for Portugal were: maintaining national sovereignty and Portugal's independence; to preserve the Portuguese fleet from falling into French hands; facilitate the “defense” of Portugal by British troops; and opening the ports of Brazil to trade (it was more the price to pay than an advantage, as the big dividends were for England).

Shortly after Napoleon's ultimatum to the Prince Regent, the Council of State considered the different options. The acceptance of the ultimatum would certainly imply a bombing of Lisbon by the British (as had happened in Copenhagen), but also the loss of the Portuguese armada and the occupation of the Portuguese colonies (at least) in the Atlantic. The option for refusal would lead to a scenario already known in most of Europe, which would include invasion and occupation, as well as the overthrow of the Portuguese throne.

And so, at the end of August, the Council of State suggested the most favorable solution for Portugal, which involved transferring the capital and the court to Brazil. This was the difficult and strategic decision taken by the Prince Regent, which included, in the fleet escorted by the English, not only the royal family, but also the court and the government, its officials and the state apparatus. In practice, the Brazil option implied that the entire Portuguese elite would move to the city of Rio de Janeiro. While preparing for the great trip, the diplomats were entertaining the French in order to gain more time. On the other hand, the French met with the Spanish to discuss the fate of Portugal, having secretly signed the Treaty of Fontainebleau, which divided the country between the two powers.

Meanwhile, up to the last moment the Prince would mention to those around him that duty prevented him from abandoning his people. Even when Junot entered Spain, with a mission to occupy Portugal, there was still hope that his troops would be stopped. And so, at the beginning of November, and after some indecisions<sup>13</sup>, and with Junot already concentrating his forces near the border, D. João finally decided on the Brazil option, not without first trying other solutions with Junot himself (who he had been ambassador to Lisbon in 1805).

“On November 23, a copy of Napoleon *Le Moniteur's* official organ arrived in Lisbon in record time, sent expressly from England in a mail boat. It presented the news that D. João had surely been waiting for, but which he had refused to believe – the announcement of Napoleon's decision to put an end to the Bragança dynasty and usurp the Portuguese throne.” (Wilcken, 2004, p. 35).

And it was in fact at the last moment that the Anglo-Portuguese fleet set sail, on the morning of November 29, when Junot's invading troops were already at the gates of Lisbon. These were very turbulent times for the royal family, for aristocrats, ministers, priests and servants, as it involved the embarkation of around 10,000 people on forty fragile warships and merchants, poorly prepared for a transatlantic voyage of about two months, under British escort, towards a "New World", which had never before seen a King<sup>14</sup>. Junot would arrive in Lisbon at 9 am on November 30th and would be received by supporters of the French, mostly members of Portuguese Freemasonry.

“The departure of the royal family to Brazil meant the continuation of Portuguese sovereignty, in this case, outside Europe, which represented a defeat for Napoleon. From Bahia and later from Rio de Janeiro, the Prince Regent ordered the opening of South American ports to British navigation and trade” (Teixeira, 2017, p. 373). For Borges de Macedo (1978, p. 353) “the withdrawal of the royal family to Brazil was thus the first and decisive defeat for Napoleonic France [...] which could thus do nothing about the Portuguese royal house...”.

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<sup>13</sup> That even included an ultimatum to the English ships to leave Lisbon.

<sup>14</sup> Regarding the details of the trip and reflections on the consequences of this option for Portugal, we suggest reading the work published in 2004 by Patrick Wilcken, and entitled “Império à deriva: a corte portuguesa no Rio de Janeiro 1808-1821”.

The royal family and the Portuguese court arrived in Salvador on January 22, and in Rio de Janeiro on March 7, 1808. And reality would prove most of the advantages equated by the Council of State, but also some inconveniences. Effectively the most important was guaranteed: the sovereignty and independence of Portugal.

The explanation for the transfer of the prince regent and the court was made by the prince himself in Brazil, on May 9, 1808, in a charter addressed to his vassals, to Europe and to posterity. The prince intended to avoid a useless outpouring of blood and assumed that it was not possible to make agreements with France, which had been disrespecting Portugal since 1801, placing the country in an unfair and humiliating situation. He also alluded to the disrespect regarding the 1804 treaty, in which France had agreed to respect Portuguese neutrality. Thus, he declared war on France and recognized the friendship of his old and faithful ally, Great Britain (Barata, 2003, p. 52)<sup>15</sup>. The transfer of the crown and seat of a European government to one of its colonies in the New World was unprecedented. Despite the difficulties, a whole new structure of administration and central government was built in Rio de Janeiro, which worked in connection and articulation with the Board of Governors of the Kingdom in Lisbon, after the occupation by Junot, without forgetting the demands of the Brazilian space itself, with threats from the North (France) and the South (Spain).

On the other hand, the Portuguese fleet was safeguarded from being imprisoned by the French, but it was of little use during the war until it was abandoned in Brazilian lands, as there was no financial capacity to recover it.

Regarding the weight of the British in rebuilding the Army and later in the battles against the French, it was indeed enormous. Far beyond the commander-in-chief, the British dominated the officer corps, especially in the highest or most important posts. For many French supporters, Portugal witnessed the occasional occupation of France and permanent occupation of England, at least until 1814.

Finally, the opening of the ports of Brazil to trade was highly favorable to England, following the concessions contained in the treaties of 1807, by the royal charter of January 28, 1808<sup>16</sup> and then by the treaty of February 19, 1810<sup>17</sup>. Navigation was no longer compelled to go to Portugal and pay duties there, before its merchandise was exported to any part of the world. With these treaties, Portugal suffered a profound blow to its trade and England began to have immense benefits. And 1808 coincided

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<sup>15</sup> For most authors, such as Borges de Macedo (1978, p. 366) and us as well, the declaration of war was based on a manifesto by the prince regent dated May 1, 1808 (on the eve of the Madrid uprising). "This was the first act of public international law of the royal government, concerning the Portuguese situation in the Peninsula, as a result of the Napoleonic invasion, since it was installed in Brazil". For other authors, it was from a decree of the Prince Regent, dated June 10, 1808.

<sup>16</sup> Opening of Brazilian ports to foreign ships on equal terms with the Portuguese and permission to import goods of all precedence. This measure constituted a profound alteration of the exclusivist system and satisfied British interests that had long sought direct participation in Brazilian trade (Viana, 1996. p. 166).

<sup>17</sup> A trade and navigation treaty that, in addition to confirming the 1808 charter, established a true British monopoly in the trade of manufactures with Brazil and several restrictions on the entry of Brazilian products into Great Britain. In practice, it represented the end of Brazil's colonial status. From this Treaty onwards, the old limitations and subordinations to the Metropolis were successively removed.

exactly with the country's severe economic depression and a sort of economic emancipation of Brazil.

Another important aspect of D. João's presence in Brazil was his commitment to the integrity of the territory and consolidation of borders, with military interventions to the South and North. In the North, D. João determined the invasion of French Guiana, which would be occupied on January 12, 1808. In the South, and taking advantage of the fragility of the Spanish colonial administration (resulting from the arrest of Fernando VII of Spain by Napoleon), the struggles for conquest of Rio de la Plata and Sacramento were constant, but also internal, given that Princess Carlota Joaquina, wife of D. João and sister of Fernando VII, had as a project the conquest of the Spanish throne and the creation of those southern lands, on the side of the Spanish crown (Costa, 2021, p. 309).

Thus, we can conclude that the option of transferring the capital and the royal family to Brazil, creating an essentially political, diplomatic and economic theater of operations, was courageous and exemplary, and achieved pre-defined political objectives, that is, it ensured the maintenance of Portugal's independence in the concert of Nations, within the scope of a global strategy that included different general strategies and both European and American lands. However, as we shall see, the sacrifices were mainly made by the Portuguese on the mainland, who saw their people sacrificed and their lands occupied throughout three French invasions.

#### **4. Fight on the Continent, Safeguarding the Empire**

Shortly after the departure of the royal family for Brazil, French and Spanish troops entered Lisbon, under the command of Junot, without encountering resistance and even being received by deputies from Freemasonry and by sectors of the bourgeoisie who considered them liberators and representatives of the liberal ideals of the French Revolution. Shortly after, three Spanish divisions invaded Portugal without any opposition, in accordance with the guidelines left by D. João. The military conquest of Portugal was concluded and would be followed by the disarmament of the kingdom (dissolution of the Portuguese army of line and also of the militias)<sup>18</sup>.

After the formal annexation<sup>19</sup> and dissolution of the Council of Regency, and after several episodes of repression and violence perpetrated by French troops and the withdrawal of Spanish troops (following the Madrid revolution of 2 May), revolutionary juntas were formed (Porto, Braga, Faro, etc.) and started the "hunt" against the invaders and "raised large bands of armed civilians, who made it difficult for the French columns to maneuver in the mountains and valleys of the North [of Portugal]" (Reis, 2010, p. 444). The first conflict between the French and the Portuguese took place when the

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<sup>18</sup> And it constituted a corps that was sent to France, with about 10,000 men committed to French ideas, under the command of D. Pedro de Almeida and Portugal, Marquis de Alorna (the Portuguese Legion, organized into five infantry regiments and two of cavalry).

<sup>19</sup> On February 1, 1808 – when, "by the will of the Emperor, the Bragança dynasty ceased to reign in Portugal".

French flag was raised in the castle of S. Jorge, in Lisbon, on December 13, 1807. However, the formal declaration of war would take place through the manifest of May 1, 1808 of the Prince Regent, announced in Rio de Janeiro, thus assuming himself as sovereign power and giving coverage to the national uprising that would take place about three months later.

In August 1808, an English army landed at the mouth of the Mondego, under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley (later Duke of Wellington), who managed to expel the French, after defeating them in the battles of Roliça and Vimeiro, always with the indispensable help of the Portuguese resistance. However, by decree of March 7, 1809, the Prince Regent appointed the Englishman Beresford as marshal general and commander in chief of the Portuguese army, who would reorganize the army, introducing it to tactical innovations and discipline – and who would govern the country on the continent, practically until 1820.

Mainland Portugal constituted a very important theater of operations for England, which would continue to support the Portuguese forces during the two invasions<sup>20</sup> that followed: in 1809, under the command of Soult (by Chaves – it lasted only four months); and in 1810, under the command of André Massena (by Beira Alta). In any of the invasions, but especially in Massena, the role of irregular warfare, unleashed by the populations, was decisive for the victory, although it is not always recognized, because it was not coordinated at the highest level of politics and strategy.

In this regard, we agree with the thesis of Professor António José Telo (2016, pp. 656-662), from which we highlight:

- British action concentrated on reorganizing the first-line army (the Portuguese Armada was in Brazil and England did not need it in Europe);
- the reorganization of 1808-1809 created three very distinct forces. However, the British only highlighted the first, relating to the first-line Army, which was armed, trained and commanded by the British (superior command by Marshal Beresford) and which reached 60,000 men in 1813; the second force was formed by militias and ordinances, as reserve of the first line, as a territorial defense force and an irregular or guerrilla action force – directed, trained and armed by the Portuguese and with more than 200,000 men; and the third force formed by the populations displaced by the scorched earth policy, who “are engaged in a guerrilla action without barracks and without rules against the invaders”;

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<sup>20</sup> “While Wellington supervised the survey of the Lines of Torres Vedras [a formidable military work designed by Major Neves Costa - it consisted of an obstacle in three parallel lines, formed by 108 forts and 151 strongholds, posts and batteries, with 1067 artillery pieces garnished with close to 70,000 men first, and 100,000 later – over 100 km], Beresford was dedicated to adapting the Portuguese military forces to the combat logic of the British forces through arduous and intensive training. D. Miguel Pereira Forjaz was in charge of the reorganization of the Army. In the space of months, these three men made the Anglo-Portuguese army more effective and powerful.” (Teixeira, 2017, p. 385).

- it was the joint action of the three forces, even without real coordination between them, that created hell for the French invader.

This thesis by António Telo complements the traditional theses of Britain and most national and Brazilian historians, which summarize the combats and battles of the Peninsular War to the maneuver of the first-line armies, without giving due value to the other, often decisive forces (directly or indirectly)<sup>21</sup>. This was the case of the third invasion of Massena, in which more than half a million Portuguese abandoned their homes and burned lands, forming bands with special weapons that fought the French with a ferocity superior to the first-line armies or even the militias and ordinances. On the other hand, most of the fortifications were manned by Portuguese militias, the front-line army being concentrated behind the lines, ready to counterattack should the French make the mistake of launching an attack in the open. After ten months, Massena left Portugal with about 41% casualties (26,000), in which only 20% had been lost in the Battle of Buçaco and the remaining 80% in the hell of the scorched earth policy, in the wear and tear caused by irregular groups of military and civilians (Telo, 2016, p. 662). This 1810-1811 campaign is “an excellent example of the combination of regular and irregular action, in a maneuver that was as much political as military and that only makes sense when inserted in a great long-term erosion strategy”. For David Buttery “the third invasion of Portugal marked a turning point in the Peninsular War, a conflict that played a crucial role in the downfall of Napoleon Bonaparte and his empire” (2008, p. 15). As engraved on the Buçaco monument, which recalls the Portuguese contribution to the Napoleonic Wars, Portugal's participation resulted in 125 combats and 25 battles, but also in numerous irregular warfare actions, perhaps more consequential to the victories over the troops of Napoleon.

Thus, the British strategy for Portugal, in the context of a global war, can be summarized as follows:

- to assume the command of the Anglo-Portuguese army and the direction of the Council of Regency (the government of the Kingdom while the court was in Brazil), in effect the civil and military direction, with great powers in the hands of Wellington;
- to attract the French armies to the Peninsula, where they would not be able to obtain decisive results and where they would suffer great attrition due to the scorched earth policy, the guerrillas and the growing vulnerability due to the greater depth of the forces.

And this strategy succeeded through the financing of the allies (and the opening of the ports in Brazil) and the domination of the seas and a small army, which used the

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<sup>21</sup> Highlighted by General Themudo Barata, first president of CPHM, one of the first Portuguese authors to emphasize the importance of irregular warfare in the Peninsular War and especially in the 1810-11 campaign (the third invasion of Massena). In fact, the articles “Milícias and Ordinances in the fight against the invader” (Barata, 2003, pp 150-156), “A subversive process in accelerated march” (Barata, 2003, pp 157-163), “Subversion organizes itself at the national level” (Barata, 2003, pp 164-174) and “A defensive wall” (Barata, 2003, pp. 175-187), highlight the importance of the subversive war launched by the Portuguese, “whose effects were decisive for the final result”.

Portuguese forces and population to make the maneuver of its small (but well prepared) first-line army, in a ratio of 1/40 between the British and the French army, after all its main opponent. It was a global strategy (and somehow indirect, because it used all forms of coercion), based on long-term erosion, which preserved its forces, its lands and its people. As Wellington made clear "Portugal was more a battleground than an ally." (Reis, 2010, p. 446).

In practice, England's construction of global power happened gradually and the Peninsular War was part of this global picture.

However, as António Telo highlights, it is important to note that the English success in the Peninsula in general and in Portugal in particular was due to the political strategy defined by Wellington, which centralized the consequent and subordinate military maneuver. The political-military objective was to attract and wear out the enemy in a maneuver in which Portugal was a component of the most global strategy in the World and in the Peninsula, which included not only the military instrument, but above all the economic and diplomatic one<sup>22</sup>. On the other hand, and in strictly military terms, the success was mainly due to "the brilliant way in which regular action was combined with irregular action and naval power" (Telo, 2016), an action characteristic of Portuguese military art, which with reduced military forces and the active participation of the population achieved results far beyond their capabilities.

In essence, three invasions were defeated by Portugal with the help of England, with highlight to the Portuguese guerrilla war led by General Silveira and Colonel Trant, which contributed to the demoralization of French troops and to cutting their lines of communication.

But this global strategy of England and the active participation of the Portuguese population in the irregular war had enormous consequences in economic and social terms, with the destruction of land and the death of many, still remembered throughout Portugal.

As General Themudo Barata (2003, p. 130) says: "The Peninsular War had a territorial character without fronts. It was a disorderly war, fragmentary and not subject to a preconceived plan [...] And it was also an extremely violent and bloody war in which the battles, fought between tens of thousands of troops on both sides, were a real carnage with hundreds and sometimes thousands of dead and wounded [...] It was also an all-out war. The populations were extremely sacrificed by the shootings, abuses, looting, devastation and destruction perpetrated by the French...".

However, it is important to highlight that Brazil had become an autonomous state, economically and politically. Brazilians began to trade directly with foreigners and Rio de Janeiro acquired the institutions of the capital of a monarchy, which would have direct consequences on its independence in 1822. "As the resistance of the Government

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<sup>22</sup> As Borges de Macedo points out, "...dire was his [Napoleon's] idea that a military strategy can be carried out based on the assumption that economic factors are separable from political and cultural ones." (1978, p.365).

of Rio de Janeiro to British pressure to return to Lisbon or to abolish the slave trade suggests, this English ascendant did not simply translate into submission. Rather, it corresponded to a calculated option of the Government of Rio, aware that it needed England, either to conserve Portugal in Europe or to make Brazil the main base of a strengthened State.” (Reis, 2010, p. 447).

Less well known was the participation of Portugal in the army commanded by Wellington in the liberation of Spain, in pursuit of French forces between 1812 and 1814. Anglo-Portuguese troops entered France in 1813, already accompanied by Spanish corps, having defeated the army of Soult in successive battles, until the battle of Toulouse which took place on 6 April 1814, two days after Napoleon had abdicated. And here it was mainly the first-rate Portuguese military forces that fought in an exemplary way.

In fact, it was the success of Portugal's global strategy, which included the two theaters of operations (Brazil - with greater weight in the political, diplomatic and economic aspects; and the mainland - with greater weight in the military aspect), that contributed to Portugal having a seat at the Congress of Vienna, where it saw its participation in the Peninsular War recognized, through the consolidation of its borders, but above all through the guarantee of its independence as a sovereign State.

## **5. Final considerations**

Portugal, as a country with some of the oldest borders in the world, fought for the “maintenance of its independence” during the Peninsular War, without ever having lost it, but with very high costs.

The strategic analysis of the Peninsular War from a more global perspective, with the proper connection between the theaters of operations in Brazil and the Continent, and considering the different general strategies, led us to six final considerations, namely:

1. In this Global War, between the maritime power (England) and the continental one (France) for the conquest of World Power, the Peninsula in general and Portugal in particular, constituted a decisive instrument of the English strategy in the sense of weakening and defeating France. We agree with the thesis that the Peninsular War was dominated by an English global strategy, materialized by Wellington. For the British, the Peninsula was part of the global maneuver to attract and wear down the French, which included the military component, but also the political, diplomatic and above all the economic component. With regard to the military component, the success was certainly due to British command, discipline, training, armament and equipment, but also to “the brilliant way in which regular action was combined with irregular action and naval power”. And as António Telo and Themudo Barata refer, irregular action, characteristic of Portuguese military art, was certainly decisive for the success of the allies in general and of the Portuguese in Portugal, who preferred to die

independent than to live occupied. But it is important to point out that the political, diplomatic and above all economic components played a decisive role in the global strategy, due to the strategic option of transferring the capital and the court to Brazil. This strategic option contributed considerably to weaken the French trade and navy, to consolidate Brazil's borders with Spain (South) and France (North) and, finally, to give way to a new independent country, Brazil, under the leadership of the Portuguese prince D. Pedro, its first emperor<sup>23</sup>.

2. Portugal actively participated in the so-called Peninsular War in two theaters of operations:
  - that of Brazil, materialized by the courageous transfer of the capital and the kingdom, from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro, with greater weight in terms of general political, diplomatic and economic strategies;
  - and that of the continent, with a determining weight of the general military strategy, materialized in the combats of the Anglo-Portuguese forces in the face of the three French invasions of 1807, 1809 and 1810.
  
3. At the level of general strategies:
  - the political strategy has always been related to the national options associated with maintaining independence, such as the transfer of the capital and the crown to Brazil and the management of internal struggles, including between the king and his Spanish wife;
  - diplomatic strategy was dominated by the management of the relationship with England, even before 1807 (with Portugal's participation in the Rossilhão Campaign and in the War of the Oranges);
  - the economic strategy, perhaps the most important for the English, was dominated by commercial concessions to England from Brazilian ports, which would lead Portugal to go from an always positive trade balance to an always negative one, with the consequent fall of the relative power of Portugal in economic terms, which completely altered the very relationship with England.
  - and, finally, the general military strategy, in which Portugal, with the support of England, transformed its army, which became one of the best in Europe, at the level of the British. Guided by British military strategy, it managed to defend the borders and impose "their" war on the enemy, even creating a new corps of officers with consequences for the political future (Telo, 2021). In this context, the emphasis is still on the irregular war, materialized by the decisive action of the Portuguese militias and ordinances (in practice "the people in arms"), not always coordinated with the first-line troops, but which the English knew how to use in a political-military maneuver of erosion and success.

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<sup>23</sup> Thesis defended, among other historians, by António Pedro Vicente (2000) and Jorge Martins Ribeiro (2009).

4. These two theaters of operations were thus part of a global strategy, in which the different general strategies (political, diplomatic, economic and military) were properly coordinated, despite the constraints arising from the distance between Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro. Indeed, “Never before had a European king gone to live in a colony overseas, and rule the metropolis from there. And never had a European monarch proposed that a single Nation, divided by a great Ocean, “federate” the ancient metropolis with a great colony, having in it its capital and its kings.” (Amaral, 2019, p. 258). Therefore, this is an exceptional situation that was due to the overseas nature of the Portuguese Empire, but above all to D. João's courageous decision-making, duly encouraged and supported by England.
5. As a result of this concerted effort, the maintenance of independence and the consolidation of borders in Europe and South America were ensured, despite the disastrous consequences in economic and social terms for the Portugal that won the Congress of Vienna<sup>24</sup>.
6. At the end of the War, and despite the success of the English and Portuguese global strategy, Portugal was a ruined State, with a monarchy affected by the Brazilian option of D. João, which turned Portugal into a colony of Brazil, and with the indignation of a suffering population dominated by the English that would continue to be used in successive revolutions. This English rule would condition Portugal's freedom of political, economic and military action in the following years, which included the maintenance of Prince D. Pedro as the first emperor of the new independent country, Brazil, in 1822, but also a fratricidal civil war between absolutists and liberals (the so-called War between Brothers – D. Miguel and D. Pedro), which would drag Portugal into poverty, at least until 1834.

We can thus conclude that Portugal's participation in the Peninsular War was a success within the scope of a Global Strategy, which would ensure, through the coordination between the different general strategies materialized in two theaters of operations, the main national political objective, which was the survival of Portugal as a sovereign and independent country. The price was high, both at the expense of the enemies and later on the allies, but the greater good was preserved: the maintenance of Portugal's independence.

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<sup>24</sup> The Portuguese delegation was presided over by the Count of Palmela, having secured the borders prior to the beginning of the war, namely in Brazil. The only unresolved issue was the restitution of Olivença (which had been handed over to the Spaniards by the Treaty of Badajoz of 1801). An important issue, transversal to all discussions, was the abolition of the slave trade, conditioning the positions of colonial powers such as Portugal.

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# XLVI ICMH Congress in Athens

## *“Independence Wars since the XVIII Century”*



***“Portugal in the Peninsular War: a war for the “maintenance” of independence”***



**Portugal** has been an independent country since **1143**, with one of the oldest borders in the world, defined in **1297** and, unlike the vast majority of European countries, it has never lost its independence.



**Peninsular War** was the situation in which Portugal was **closest to losing its independence.**

It then fought for the “maintenance” of independence, as a result of the strategic option to transfer the capital and the kingdom from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro, which then ensured formal independence, even considering the three Napoleonic invasions of the mainland national territory.



## **Two theaters of operations:**

**1. Brazil, essentially political, diplomatic and economic, following the strategic option of moving the capital and the kingdom to Brazil;**

**2. Continent, essentially military, following the battles and combats waged against the French, with the support of England, the strategic ally, which guaranteed the sovereignty and maintenance of the integrity of the Empire.**



## **Objective:**

**Link the two theaters of operations within a global strategy, which includes different general strategies (political, diplomatic, economic and military), coordinated by the English and the Portuguese, and based on Portuguese and Brazilian schools.**



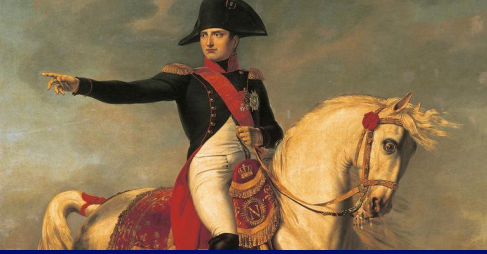
- 1. Introduction**
- 2. National and international environment**
- 3. Transfer the capital and the kingdom from  
Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro**
- 4. Fight on the Continent, safeguarding the  
Empire**
- 5. Final considerations**



-The French Revolution of 1789 was one of the most important milestones in the history of humanity.

-As early as 1793, Spain declared war on France and Portugal would participate, with an Auxiliary Army to the Crown of Spain, in the so-called Campaign of Roussillon and Catalonia until 1795, alongside the Spanish and with the support of the English, against revolutionary France.

-After the Amiens treaty and Napoleon's initial great victories, from Austerlitz to Jena, France could not militarily dominate England, the real maritime power. That was why **Napoleon** chose to isolate and economically asphyxiate England, through the so-called "Continental Blockade" (Berlin decree of November 21, 1806)...



-The Portuguese land border coincided with the border between the maritime (England) and continental (France) powers, highlighting three factors influencing the strategic options: the maritime position of Portugal; the overseas domains; and Spain as the only neighbor.

-Traditionally, Portugal opted for maritime power in an extreme situation, in order to maintain its overseas domains and protect itself from its Spanish neighbor. On the other hand, for England it was essential to use the Portuguese territorial nucleus and the adjacent islands (Madeira and Azores) for the development of its global strategy to combat the continental power.

-Napoleon sent an ultimatum to the Prince Regent of Portugal: either Portugal broke relations with England by September 1st or it would be invaded by French troops.



D. João's option was then to **move the capital and the kingdom to Brazil**, with the support of England, having given orders for the constitution of a Regency Council and so that resistance was not offered to the French, in a way to safeguard the Portuguese people and lands.

This unique **strategic option**, which took some 10,000 people on 40 ships to Brazil on November 29th, 1807, under British escort, **would safeguard national independence, but would not protect Portugal from a fratricidal war.**



- Napoleon's immediate response initiated the **Peninsular War**, with the invasion and occupation of Portugal by the French and Spanish armies by around 28,000 men and under the command of Jean-Andoche Junot. This first invasion would be followed by another two invasions...
- Portugal's economic base was Brazil, as between half and two thirds of the Portuguese state's revenues came from the trade that linked Brazil to Europe.
- The main **advantages of the Brazil option** for Portugal were: maintain national sovereignty and Portugal's independence; preserve the Portuguese fleet from falling into French hands; facilitate the “defense” of Portugal by British troops; and open the ports of Brazil to trade (more advantages for England).



- After the formal annexation and dissolution of the Council of Regency, and after several episodes of repression and violence, **a revolutionary junta arose in several cities**. The junta hunted the invaders and gathered large bands of armed civilians, who in mountains and valleys in the north made it difficult for the French columns to maneuver.

- **In August 1808, an English army landed at the mouth of the Mondego, under the command of Sir Arthur Wellesley (later Duke of Wellington), which would succeed in expelling the French, after defeating them in the battles of Roliça and Vimeiro, always with the indispensable help of the Portuguese resistance. On March 7th, 1809, the Prince Regent appointed Beresford as Marshal General and Commander-in-Chief of the Portuguese Army...**

# CONTINENT



- Mainland Portugal constituted a very important theater of operations for England, which would continue to support the Portuguese forces during the two invasions that followed: in 1809, under the command of **Soult** (by Chaves – it lasted only four months); and in 1810, under the command of **André Massena** (via Beira Alta and which would stop at the Linhas de Torres).
- In any of the invasions, but especially with Massena, the role of **irregular warfare**, unleashed by the populations, was decisive for the victory, although it was not always recognized.

# FINAL CONSIDERATIONS



1. In this Global War, between England and France for the conquest of World Power, the Peninsula in general and Portugal in particular constituted a decisive instrument of the British global strategy in the sense of weakening and defeating France.

2. Portugal actively participated in the so-called Peninsular War, **fundamentally in two theaters of operations:**

- **Brazil**, materialized by the courageous transfer of the capital and the kingdom from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro, with greater weight in terms of general political, diplomatic and economic strategies;

- **Continent**, with a determining weight of the general military strategy, materialized in the combats of the Anglo-Portuguese forces in the face of the three French invasions of 1807, 1809 and 1810.



### 3. At the level of **general strategies**:

-**politics**, related to the options associated with maintaining independence, such as the transfer of the capital and the crown to Brazil and the management of internal struggles...

-**diplomatic**, dominated by the management of the relationship with England;

-**economic**, dominated by commercial concessions to England, from the Brazilian ports, which would lead Portugal to go from an always positive trade balance to one that was always negative...

-**military**, in which Portugal, with the support of England, transformed its army, which, guided by British military strategy, managed to defend the borders and impose its form of war on the enemy, determined by the brilliant way in which regular action was combined with the irregular and with the naval power.

# FINAL CONSIDERATIONS



4. The **two theaters of operations were part of a global strategy**, in which the different general strategies (political, diplomatic, economic and military) were properly coordinated, despite the constraints arising from the distance between Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro.

5. As a result of this concerted effort, **the maintenance of independence and the consolidation of borders in Europe and South America were ensured** despite the disastrous consequences in economic and social terms for the Portugal that won the Congress of Vienna.

# FINAL CONSIDERATIONS



6. At the end of the War (despite the success of the English and Portuguese global strategy), Portugal was a ruined State, with a monarchy affected by the Brazilian option of D. João, and with the indignation of the people suffering and dominated by the British (who would be used in successive revolutions in the future).

In conclusion, Portugal's participation in the Peninsular War was a success within the scope of a Global Strategy, which would ensure, through the coordination between the different general strategies, materialized in two theaters of operations, and with high human losses, the main political national objective: the maintenance of Portugal's independence.

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## *“Independence Wars since the XVIII Century”*



***“Portugal in the Peninsular War: a war for the “maintenance” of independence”***