

## HISTORICAL RÉSUMÉ OF THE PUBLIC ARCHIVES OF THE STATE OF SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

THE following text is a summarized translation of the "Resumo Histórico do Arquivo Publico de São Paulo," published in 1939 as an introduction to the catalogue of documents in the archives of that state, in *Publicações do Arquivo Nacional*, Volume xxxvi. A few paragraphs have been omitted, and references to laws and decrees found in the body of the Portuguese text have been placed in footnotes in order to maintain as clear an exposition as possible. Furthermore, a brief description of the catalogued material in the Public Archives of São Paulo has been added at the end of the translation of the "Resumo." The work of rendering this description into English has been undertaken with the hope that it will contribute something to our present vague and inaccurate knowledge of archival history and economy in Latin America. The fact that São Paulo is Brazil's most influential state enhances the value of this information to North American archivists.

### RESUMO HISTÓRICO . . .<sup>1</sup>

As the late Dr. Antonio de Toledo Piza has said, the Public Archives of the state of São Paulo constitute a consultative agency of great value for the government, where at any time, the administration of the state and the public will find papers and books preserved therein through which they may inform themselves concerning those facts of the past which may influence the present.

The present Department of Archives of the state had its origin in 1721, being formed of the noncurrent records of the former Secretariat of Government (*Secretaria do Govêrno*), of which Gervasio Rebello was the first secretary. On September 11 of that year, Rebello made an inventory of the books and manuscripts then existing in the files.

Originally, the secretariat was a dependency of the "Palace of the Captain General" of São Paulo. This was never a suitable arrangement, and the office was constantly being moved until the

<sup>1</sup> "Resumo histórico do Arquivo Publico de São Paulo," *Publicações do Arquivo Nacional* (Rio de Janeiro. Ministério da Justiça e Negócios Interiores, 1939), xxxvi, 5-11.

time of Brazilian independence in 1822. When the captaincy general of São Paulo was suppressed in 1748, and annexed to Rio de Janeiro, the old books and records of completed transactions were deposited almost anywhere, as Dr. Antonio Piza has stated, but all those which referred to negotiations still in progress were sent either to the governor of the fort at Santos or to the viceroy in Rio de Janeiro. These records were handled in such a manner that Dom Luiz Antonio de Souza Botelho Mourão, no matter how hard he tried, never was able to find any papers which might serve as guides to the public services up to the time that the government was installed in the old convent in the City of São Paulo. There, in the basement, he assembled rare old books and manuscripts from the state capital [São Paulo], Santos, and Rio de Janeiro, which gave a new beginning to the present Department of Archives.

In 1842, the provincial assembly passed a law on March 8, which established the Public Archives.<sup>2</sup> However, despite the approval of the president of the province, the act was never put into force. Somewhat later Dr. José Antonio Saraiva, president of the province, issued regulations for the archives, May 4, 1855. These rules were altered subsequently in 1857, and again in 1865.<sup>3</sup> [This legislation appears to be the fundamental basis for the organization of the São Paulo archives.]

In 1855, during the administration of Councillor João Alfredo, the Public Archives were found to be "in a chaotic state." Reorganization was undertaken by a commission composed of Diogo José de Andrade Machado, the archivist; Mariano da Purificação Fonseca, assistant to the archivist; Antonio Pedro de Oliveira, chief of section; and Antonio de Magalhães, second officer. At about this same time, the office of archivist was created by the regulations of May 4, 1855; and that of assistant to the archivist by the Law of January 7, 1857. However, the latter post was abolished shortly afterward by the Law of May 11, 1859.<sup>4</sup>

Nearly twenty years later, the Public Archives were again in a state of confusion. Consequently, Dr. José Teodoro Xavier, president of the province, took steps to remedy the situation by creating

<sup>2</sup> Law No. 8, Mar. 8, 1842.

<sup>3</sup> The president was authorized to issue regulations by Law No. 30, May 10, 1854. The changes were effected by Chap. 4, Law No. 1, Jan. 7, 1857; and Chap. 5, Law No. 4, May 4, 1865.

<sup>4</sup> The post of assistant to the archivist was created by Art. 1, Law No. 2, Jan. 7, 1857; and abolished by Art. 42, Law No. 27, May 11, 1859.

another commission. This board, appointed by an order of May 12, 1874, was composed of Candido Roberto de Azevedo Segurado, archivist of the secretariat (*Arquivista da Secretaria*); his assistant, Mariano da Purificação Fonseca; and two citizens, Antonio Gomes de Araujo, Jr., and João Batista da Cruz, who were directed to reorganize the establishment.

In 1881, Dr. Laurindo de Brito, president of the province, who took real interest in the archives, asked funds of the assembly which should be sufficient to treat the establishment seriously. In his message, the provincial president reported that "papers were piling up," and that many had become useless because of exposure to dampness. He explained that these records were indispensable to an understanding of the history of the province.

Authorized by the assembly, the provincial president named a new commission charged with the work of reorganizing the Public Archives. This body, composed of Dr. Teófilo Dias de Mesquita and Porfirio Pires Careiro, appears to have labored for only a short time, no records concerning it having been found in the archives.

Meanwhile, in the same year that reorganization was being discussed, the Public Archives were once more thrown into disorder when the hall in which they had been stored was demolished. Consequently, it was necessary to find another location and to provide shelves and other accommodations for the records. In 1882, Antonio de Magalhães was given charge of this work, which was finished in the following year.

During the last administration of João Alfredo, 1885-1886, the Public Archives were reorganized by another commission which was identical in personnel with that named by Alfredo in 1855.

As Dr. Antonio de Toledo Piza has said, "None of the several commissions for the reorganization of the archives, which were named by the provincial government, kept any record of their work." He also stated that while these commissions were functioning, many cart loads of records were carried out of the establishment to be burned, which had never been examined or judged worthless by the commissioners.

The present Public Archives of the state of São Paulo dates from the early days of the republic. In 1892, the Agency of Statistics and Archives was created.<sup>5</sup> This office, besides possessing statistical func-

<sup>5</sup> The agency was authorized by Art. 41, Law No. 15, Nov. 11, 1891; and promulgated by decree of A. J. de Cerqueira Cesar, president of the state, Mar. 10, 1892.

tions, also was empowered to preserve, co-ordinate, and classify all papers, documents, and books pertaining to constitutional law, political and administrative history, legislation, and geography of the state of São Paulo; and all other documents which the government might consider proper. The agency was placed under the supervision of Lieutenant Colonel Francisco José da Silveira Lobo, and the archivist was João Candido de Carvalho.<sup>6</sup>

Meanwhile, as the statistical requirements had not been met by the decree establishing the agency, the state congress enacted further legislation which divided the office into three sections, greatly enlarged its functions, and increased its personnel to twenty-six employees.<sup>7</sup> The third section constituted the archival establishment.

The organization of the library also dates from 1892. This part of the institution was enriched in 1903, by the acquisition of various official publications and four thousand different works. It forms today a specialized library which includes valuable collections of general laws, provincial laws, laws of the republic, royal letters, provisions, messages, reports, annals, legislation; publications of the several states of the Brazilian Union; and reviews, journals, and other periodicals, totalling more than ten thousand volumes. The entire library has been labelled, catalogued, and arranged in sections.

One more commission was named on March 16, 1906, to select papers, documents, and books found in the archives for the purpose of disposing of useless items. The commissioners were Drs. Adolfo Botelho de Abreu Sampaio, Eugenio de Andrade Egas, and the well-known Anselmo de Carvalho and Antonio Egídio Martins. Senhor Benedito Angelo de Oliveira was named an auxiliary member of the commission.

This commission performed its labors most conscientiously, particularly that portion of it which was concerned with the burning of useless papers and books. Those selected were examined minutely by all the members of the commission. Their reports were transmitted through the Secretary of State for Interior Affairs in order that the entire commission should have information upon the work of other members.

Subsequently, the Agency of Statistics and Archives was again

<sup>6</sup> The assistant to the archivist was Mariano da Purificação Fonseca; and there were two copyists, Anselmo de Carvalho and José Jacinto Ribeiro, as well as a servant, Francisco Augusto da Cunha. See p. 6 of the Portuguese text.

<sup>7</sup> Law No. 116, Oct. 1, 1892, which was put into effect by Decree No. 124, Nov. 11, 1892.

reorganized in 1911. Its staff was increased to thirty-two, and another statistical section was added.<sup>8</sup> Other changes in the staff were effected in 1925.<sup>9</sup>

By an act of the state congress, December 9, 1927, a new commission was named by the state government. This board was charged with the selection, cataloguing, arrangement, and labelling of the papers and books deposited in the agency. The commissioners were Drs. Djalma Forjaz and Antonio Paulino de Almeida, who, aided by several employees, selected no less than fourteen tons of useless papers for destruction. The commission transmitted daily reports to the Secretary of the Interior. At the same time, the work of cataloguing and arranging the remaining records and books was carried on.

Since 1935, the condition of the Public Archives has been improved. A *mapoteca*, or division of maps, has been organized. In order to acquire cartographical material, the agency wrote to the governors of the states, the prefects of the federal district and the state capital, and especially to the prefects of interior localities, requesting them to send in maps of municipalities, and plans of cities in order that these might become better known not only in their own neighborhood but outside of it as well. Plans are being considered to make this a Brazilian, and particularly a *Paulista*, map collection. Today there are nearly seven hundred maps, including those of the federal district, Acre Territory, and the other Brazilian states.

The Agency of Statistics and Archives which had existed since 1892 was divided in 1938. The statistical sections were incorporated into the Department of Statistics.<sup>10</sup> Until the latter year, the first three sections had been engaged in statistical work, while the fourth comprised the archives. However, by a decree of July 1, 1938, the Public Archives itself was reorganized, its functions being greatly amplified, although its personnel was not augmented.<sup>11</sup>

As constituted at present, the Public Archives of São Paulo has at its head a director, Dr. João Lellis Vieira. For administrative purposes the institution is divided internally into three sections: Ad-

<sup>8</sup> Art. 70, Cl. C, Law No. 1245, Dec. 30, 1910; promulgated by Decree No. 2187, Dec. 26, 1911.

<sup>9</sup> Decree No. 3868, July 3, 1925.

<sup>10</sup> Separation was effected by Decree No. 9036, Mar. 14, 1938; and the transfer of the statistical sections to the Department of Statistics was regulated by Decree No. 9330, July 15, 1938.

<sup>11</sup> Decree No. 9285, July 1, 1938.

ministrative, Historical, and Despatch and Accounts, each of which has at its head a chief of section. In addition, there is a Porter's Office. The Administrative Section is staffed by four clerks. The Historical Section consists of the same number of clerks and a restorer of documents. The chief of this section also bears the title of archivist (*arquivista*). The present archivist is Dr. Antonio Paulino de Almeida. The Section of Despatch and Accounts has four clerks and an aide. The Porter's Office consists of a chief porter, an assistant, and four messengers. The total number of regular employees was twenty-four in 1939, but there were several temporary clerks as well.<sup>12</sup>

All books and papers of the colonial and imperial periods are in the custody of the Historical Archives, as well as some administrative records of the republican period. In addition to the files listed in the printed catalogue, there is a considerable body of uncatalogued material, consisting of bundles (*maços*) of civil and criminal processes, inventories and wills of the city of São Paulo and Sorocaba, which were in litigation during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries; as well as the criminal proceedings from the files of the clerk of the jury of São Paulo, transferred to the Public Archives in 1899.<sup>13</sup>

### THE CATALOGUE

The catalogue of the Department of State Archives of São Paulo is also printed in *Publicações do Arquivo Nacional*, xxxvi, 33-191. It consists of four parts: the first being an alphabetical list of manuscript volumes of the colonial period; the second, a similar list covering the imperial régime, and also including some records of republican times; the third, a list of uncatalogued bundles (*maços*); and the fourth, a shelf list of uncatalogued records of the imperial epoch.<sup>14</sup>

The colonial records comprise the extant archives of the old Secretariat of Government (*Secretaria do Govêrno*) of the captaincy

<sup>12</sup> This summary is based upon the list of personnel given on pp. 9-10 of the Portuguese text.

<sup>13</sup> According to Law No. 666, Sept. 6, 1899.

<sup>14</sup> The catalogue is divided into the following sections: "Tempo Colonial: Catálogo dos livros manuscritos existentes no Departamento do Arquivo do Estado e pertencentes à extinta Secretaria do Govêrno," 33-60; "Tempo do Império (Abrange principios do periodo republicano)," 61-150; "Maços de papéis existentes nas Salas 9 e 10," 150-159; and "Papéis da Antiga Secretaria do Govêrno, Classificados por Secções, Anos e Meses—1<sup>a</sup>, 2<sup>a</sup>, e 3<sup>a</sup> Secção," 159-191.

and province of São Paulo, 1612-1822. The files consist of records made in the secretary's office or received there in the transaction of official business. They relate to many phases of the civil, ecclesiastical, and military government of the province; and its relations with both the viceregal administration at Rio de Janeiro and the municipal authorities within its own boundaries. There are royal letters of the king and viceroy (*cartas regias*); *avisos*, or orders signed by a minister in the name of the king; proclamations, decrees, royal provisions (*provisões*), land grants (*sesmarias*), and titles (*titulos*). Included among these are communications to the bishops, and letters to and from the military authorities. The latter concern defense of the frontier, enlistment of troops, equipment of regiments, and naval affairs. There are also documents concerning municipal matters, and a good many papers relating to the administration of both civil and criminal justice.

The records of the imperial period are similar in character to those of the colonial epoch, but the files listed in the catalogue indicate greater differentiation of governmental functions than existed in the preceding period. This section includes *avisos* of a number of departments such as those of Imperial Relations, Agriculture, Foreigners, Finance, War, Justice, and Marine. Incorporated in this part of the archives are the acts (*actos*) of the provincial government, 1851-1889; records of the provincial assembly, 1842-1889; judicial and municipal communications; police records; ecclesiastical records concerning bishops and curates; and a considerable body of material concerning slavery and emancipation. There are also records of elections, public works, land grants, and military affairs.

The uncatalogued material relates principally to the municipalities and also to the Secretariat of Government (*Secretaria do Governo*) of the imperial period.

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The National Archives