

The military use of animals in the Federalist Revolution of 1893

O emprego de animais na Revolução Federalista de 1893

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Abstract

This paper investigates the use of animals in the civil war of 1893, also known as the Federalist Revolution, which took place in Rio Grande do Sul, southern Brazil, in the last decade of the 19th century. The hypothesis is that, due to the characteristics of the insurgency and the territory in which it was fought, the use of animals was fundamental for both the government and the federalist revolutionaries. Publications by civil war chroniclers and memoirists, as well as press records from the time and military documents are used as a database. Examples are limited to the Campos de Cima da Serra region and, in particular, the municipalities of Lagoa Vermelha and Vacaria. The article shows that the insurgency demanded the wide use of animals that already existed in the gaúcho territory and with which the local populations had a close historical, cultural, economic, and even martial connection. At the end of the war, there was a decrease in the herds of cattle, horses, and mules, precisely the animals used in the conflict for feeding, transport, and combat functions.

Keywords: History of Animals; Animals and War; Federalist Revolution of 1893; Rio Grande do Sul

Resumo

O artigo investiga o emprego de animais na guerra civil de 1893, também conhecida como Revolução Federalista, que ocorreu no Rio Grande do Sul, Brasil, na última década do século XIX. A hipótese trabalhada é a de que, pelas características da insurgência e do território em que foi travada, a utilização de animais foi fundamental tanto para os governistas quanto para os revolucionários federalistas. São resgatados os trabalhos de cronistas e memorialistas da guerra civil, além de registros da imprensa da época e documentos militares. Os exemplos trazidos circunscrevem à região dos Campos de Cima da Serra e, em particular, aos municípios de Lagoa Vermelha e Vacaria. O artigo mostra que a insurgência demandou o amplo emprego de animais que já existiam no território gaúcho e com os quais as populações locais

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possuíam estreita ligação histórica, cultural, econômica e mesmo marcial. Ao final da guerra, houve diminuição dos rebanhos de gado, cavalos e muares, justamente os animais utilizados no conflito para as funções de alimentação, transporte e combate.

Palavras-chave: História dos Animais; Animais e Guerra; Revolução Federalista de 1893; Rio Grande do Sul

Introduction

The use of animals revolutionized the way to fight a war worldwide. Their use started from the process of domesticating species considered useful to human beings. Afterwards, they ended up being used in conflicts performing the most diverse functions such as logistics, or even on the battlefield. For this reason, the article aimed to investigate the use of animals in the civil war of 1893, also known as the Federalist Revolution, occurred in Rio Grande do Sul, in the last decade of the 19th century. We also sought to find interactions and interdependencies between human beings and animals.

The hypothesis considered is that, due to the insurgent movement characteristics and the territory over which the war was fought, the use of animals was fundamental for both the government group and the federalist revolutionaries. This conflict between human beings was developed in such a way that it would not have been possible without the participation of the cattle, mules, and horses.

To write this article, we used the work of chroniclers and memoirists of the civil war, on both sides, namely, republican and federalist, and documents by the press and the army. The examples presented are mostly limited to the Campos de Cima da Serra region and, in particular, to the municipalities of Lagoa Vermelha and Vacaria. Despite its importance to the war, that region remained marginalized in academic studies and analyses. This article, therefore, privileges that region aiming at filling in a scientific and historiographical gap.

Apart from this introduction, the article is divided into five basic sections. The first introduces the work as inserted in the study field about animals' history. The second part portrays the evolution of the use of animals in wars throughout human history. The third part exposes characteristics of the civil war of 1893, classifying it as an insurgency against the government of Júlio de Castilhos and Floriano Peixoto. In the fourth part, a graph was included illustrating the function each animal performed during the war,

detailing and exemplifying the action developed by cows, oxen, mules, donkeys, and horses. Finally, brief considerations related to the findings of the research are presented.

The history of animals

From the historiographical standpoint, this article belongs to the field of studies on the history of animals, or as defined by Aprobato Filho¹, “the history of human-animal relations”. Internationally, such studies were inaugurated with the pioneer investigations by the historian Harriet Ritvo, whose seminal work, *The animal estate: the English and other creatures and other fragments of the classifying imagination*, was published in the late 1980s, in the United States.

In Brazil, according to Duarte², the first study specifically approaching the history of animals developed by a historian was that of Nelson Aprobato Filho, published as a thesis in 2007. The thorough work by Aprobato Filho³ addresses relations between human beings and several animal species in the capital of the state of São Paulo, seeking to understand their roles in the city’s modernization process, covering the late 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century.

One of the characteristics of these studies on the history of animals is the abandonment of the traditional dichotomy between human and non-human animals. According to Duarte *et al.*⁴, this type of dyad reinforces culturally established hierarchies instead of considering the so-called “interspecies connections”. Thus, limiting the search for a horizon of varied relations between distinct animals, considering particular contexts and characteristics.

Taking that perspective into consideration, human beings relate with other animals not only in mere utilitarian terms aiming at the maximization of their desires and monetary gains in which animals are the objects and the human beings are actors. Other elements are also present such as reciprocity,

¹ APROBATO FILHO, Nelson. História dos animais: uma entrevista com a professora Harriet Ritvo. *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos*, v. 28, p. 209-220, 2022, p. 2.

² DUARTE, Regina Horta. História dos animais no Brasil: tradições culturais, historiografia e transformação. *Historia Ambiental Latinoamericana y Caribeña (HALAC) revista de la Solcha*, v. 9, n. 2, p. 16-44, 2019.

³ APROBATO FILHO, Nelson. O couro e o aço: sob a mira do moderno-: a aventura dos animais pelos jardins da Paulicéia, final do século XIX/início do XX. 2007. Tese de Doutorado. Universidade de São Paulo.

⁴ DUARTE, Regina Horta et al. Reciprocidades em desequilíbrio: história das relações entre animais. *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos*, v. 28, p. 7-10, 2021. p. 7.

complex interactions, coexistence, and interdependence networks⁵. Rescuing this relationship, via historical studies, means to build up investigations based on the denial of anthropocentrism and at the same time taking care to not anthropomorphize animals, as pointed out by Nance⁶.

Animals, therefore, are not passive elements in relation to historical processes⁷. Conversely, they were always involved in human deeds, in such a way that “humankind history is also the history of animals”⁸. Beyond the interaction they have with human beings, animals interact with the environment and with other animals, developing complex relationships, which cannot be reduced to mere domination⁹.

Animals are also considered agents, “even if most of them act without intention”¹⁰. However, we do not refer to the mainstream concept of agency, which demands the individual’s rational and intentional action, but rather another type of historical agency, whose agents (animals) do not have power, and in many cases, act as “secret agents”, influencing the human beings’ decision making in the environment they share¹¹. Therefore, animals are seen as “beings that shape human actions and reactions”¹².

This article, considering the principles found in works on the history of animals, seeks to unveil the roles played by distinct animals throughout the Federalist Revolution of 1893, overcoming a utilitarian view and revealing

⁵ DUARTE, Regina Horta. História dos animais no Brasil: tradições culturais, historiografia e transformação. *Historia Ambiental Latinoamericana y Caribeña (HALAC) revista de la Solcha*, v. 9, n. 2, p. 16-44, 2019.

⁶ NANCE, Susan. Introduction. In: NANCE, Susan (Ed.). *The Historical Animal*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2015, p. 1-15.

⁷ NANCE, Susan. Introduction. In: NANCE, Susan (Ed.). *The Historical Animal*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2015.

⁸ DUARTE, Regina Horta. História dos animais no Brasil: tradições culturais, historiografia e transformação. *Historia Ambiental Latinoamericana y Caribeña (HALAC) revista de la Solcha*, v. 9, n. 2, p. 16-44, 2019. p. 35.

⁹ POOLEY-EBERT, Andria. A Comparative Study of Horse-Human Relationships in Chicago and Rural Illinois. In: NANCE, Susan (Ed.). *The Historical Animal*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2015, p. 148-165.

¹⁰ DUARTE, Regina Horta et al. Reciprocidades em desequilíbrio: história das relações entre animais. *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos*, v. 28, p. 7-10, 2021, p. 7.

¹¹ SHAW, David Gary. The torturer’s horse: Agency and animals in history. *History and Theory*, v. 52, n. 4, p. 146-167, 2013; NANCE, Susan. Introduction. In: NANCE, Susan (Ed.). *The Historical Animal*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2015, p. 1-15.

¹² DUARTE, Regina Horta. História dos animais no Brasil: tradições culturais, historiografia e transformação. *Historia Ambiental Latinoamericana y Caribeña (HALAC) revista de la Solcha*, v. 9, n. 2, p. 16-44, 2019. p. 26.

the complexity of the interaction between human beings and animal agents in the war context.

Animals and the War

Diamond¹³ investigated the several trajectories of human societies. He highlighted the domestication of animals as a process that revolutionized history and resulted in competitive advantage to certain groups. It seems relevant to mention that there was a reduced number of species that was allowed to leave the wild status and be bred by human beings. Those animals started to perform several functions and tasks, depending on their specific characteristics, and were incorporated in society all over the planet.

Dogs, descendants of wolves, according to Hopp¹⁴, started to be domesticated around 16,000 years ago, in hunter-collector societies and due to their bark, they were bred to “accomplish the invaluable task of alerting and protecting their owners from strangers and invaders”. First bred in captivity, dogs started to have “individual owners”, becoming private property of an individual or family and, consequently, also worked to protect their other properties, when societies became sedentary¹⁵.

Other species contributed to human nutrition and amelioration of farming techniques. Domestication substituted hunting, since animals bred by human beings could be slaughtered for food, becoming a relevant source of protein¹⁶. Cows, for example, which supply meat and milk, were firstly domesticated in 6,000 BCE, in Southwestern India and Asia. Also, according to Diamond¹⁷, “large domestic mammals” helped to “increase crops”, either via the use of their manure, as a natural fertilizer in plantations, or pulling plows, a typical job for cows, oxen, horses, and buffalos. Animals, in this perspective, started to help human beings in farming activities, and due to their physical capability, also helped the development of larger crops, including places that previously were not accessible to farmers without the animal strength.

The use of animals in human activities also revolutionized the means of transportation. Human beings became able to cover long distances on the

¹³ DIAMOND, Jared. *Armas, germes e aço*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2010.

¹⁴ HOPP, Hans-Hermann. *Uma Breve História do Homem: Progresso e Declínio*. São Paulo: LVM Editora, 2018. p. 62.

¹⁵ HOPP, Hans-Hermann. *Uma Breve História do Homem: Progresso e Declínio*. São Paulo: LVM Editora, 2018.

¹⁶ DIAMOND, Jared. *Armas, germes e aço*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2010.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* p. 86.

animals' back and carry all kinds of products using wagons. The preferred animals for those activities included oxen, horses, and donkeys. The domestication of these animals started around 4,000 BCE, in the current region of Ukraine (horses) and Egypt (donkeys), respectively. Diamond¹⁸ also presents an overview of the animals used in different regions of the planet, according to their particularities. In the Andes, for example, llamas became the main means of transportation and also the most important riding animals. In Africa, Arabia, and Central Asia, this role was played by the camel, while in Eurasia, horses were highly relevant. Finally, in the Arctic, native inhabitants' sledges were pulled by dogs and reindeers¹⁹. Up to the 19th century, animal traction became an essential means of transport, due to the speed provided and the possibility of covering long distances, which were eventually overcome by other forms of travelling such as the railways.

For being a universal human activity that was even observed in pre-historical times²⁰, war was influenced by the control human beings established in relation to certain animal species. Kistler²¹, whose book aimed to “describe the work of non-human creatures in human battles”, defined two main categories of animals in war. The first group comprised “combat animals” and included dogs, elephants, horses, pigeons, and insects; the second was called “support animals” and included camels, mules, monkeys, sea lions, dolphins, oxen, and llamas.

Obviously, this is not an exhaustive list of creatures employed in conflicts throughout history, since the participation of war elephants, pigs (used to push away and threaten the elephants), and rhinoceros were also registered²². Insects cannot be forgotten, particularly due to their role in the transmission of malaria and yellow fever, which killed whole armies throughout history, thus interfering decisively in the victory or defeat of colonizers' and colonized groups' armies²³.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ DIAMOND, Jared. *Armas, germes e aço*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2010.

²⁰ KEELEY, Lawrence. *A guerra antes da civilização: o mito do bom selvagem*. São Paulo: É Realizações Editora, 2011.

²¹ KISTLER, John M. *Animals in the Military: From Hannibal's Elephants to the Dolphins of the US Navy*. ABC-CLIO, 2011. p. 11.

²² MILITARY HISTORY MATTERS. *War Culture – Animals of War*. *Military History Matters*, July 12, 2012. Retrieved from: <https://www.military-history.org/feature/war-culture-animals-of-war.htm>. Accessed on: 02-04-2023.

²³ WINEGARD, Timothy. *O mosquito: a incrível história do maior predador da humanidade*. Rio de Janeiro: Intrínseca, 2022.

Horses, undoubtedly, outstand in the list of animals cited. They revolutionized the military art and their presence prevailed until the end of the Great War²⁴. Peoples that domesticated horses and used them in the warfare were in great military advantage in relation to societies that did not go through this process, or that started this activity later in history. Initially, in the Balkans, China, and Mediterranean, they were used to pull wagons, which were invented around 2,500 BCE and 1,800 BCE, and were employed in the protection of the flanks of their formation and in providing greater mobility²⁵. The first known horse training handbook dates back to 1,345 BCE and was written by Kikkuli, who worked for the king of Hitites, a civilization from Asia Minor²⁶.

Gest²⁷ states that horses became war tools from 1,000 BCE onwards, thus altering the dynamics of battles and their rules and strategies. The use of these animals as war tools had a slow development and, initially, during part of the ancient times, mounted forces, nowadays known as cavalry, were less important than the infantry, such relation changed over times. Nonetheless, cavalry was fundamental to ensure the Victory of military leaders of those times such as Julius Caesar, Hannibal, and Alexander, the Great²⁸. Dimarco²⁹, in turn, pointed out that horses presented relevant elements in hand-to-hand combat power, such as their size and strength in relation to men. Their presence on the battlefield, had material relevance for provoking a psychological effect, which could morally affect both friendly troops (courage) and the enemies (fear).

Horses started to be mounted only after the use of wagons³⁰. According to Dimarco³¹, horses and horse riders were part of the oldest military system in the world. The upgrade of that system occurred with the invention of stirrups and saddle, which consolidated the presence of those animals in human conflicts³². A modern type of stirrups was found in China in 400 CE,

²⁴ DIAMOND, Jared. *Armas, germes e aço*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2010.

²⁵ GEST, Kevin. *As origens e a história das ordens de cavalaria*. São Paulo: Madras, 2012; DIAMOND, Jared. *Armas, germes e aço*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2010.

²⁶ SIDNELL, Philip. *Warhorse: Cavalry in ancient warfare*. A&C Black, 2006.

²⁷ GEST, Kevin. *As origens e a história das ordens de cavalaria*. São Paulo: Madras, 2012.

²⁸ SIDNELL, Philip. *Warhorse: Cavalry in ancient warfare*. A&C Black, 2006.

²⁹ DIMARCO, Louis A. *War Horse*. Westholme Publishing, 2008.

³⁰ SIDNELL, Philip. *Warhorse: Cavalry in ancient warfare*. A&C Black, 2006.

³¹ DIMARCO, Louis A. *War Horse*. Westholme Publishing, 2008.

³² DIAMOND, Jared. *Armas, germes e aço*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2010.

and the piece with the characteristics we currently know was commonly used in Europe 400 or 500 years later³³. It was possible to use bow and arrow without stirrups; however, using efficiently a heavy sword or throw a spear depended on some support point and on the rider's balance on the animal. The stirrups enabled "the use of mounted troops that held swords, which are still called cavalry", as reported by Gest³⁴. The position with stretched legs favored the attack with weapons.

Dimarco³⁵ emphasized that mounted forces became, in Medioevo, the main martial force in Europe and Asia. In the 17th and 18th centuries, the professionalization of armies occurred along with the formation of extremely competent and organized cavalries, which became the elite troops in combat in the European continent. According to that author, it was in that period that compact masses of cavalry were used against infantry for the first time. As a reaction, the infantry had to develop tactics and technologies to protect themselves against the riding warriors' attacks. Horses started to dominate battles in Europe. Diamond³⁶ observed that they were turned into the "jeeps and tanks of ancient wars in that continent", for being the "main assault vehicle and fast means of transport at war", up to the 1914-1918 conflict.

As for support animals, mules and donkeys outstood. Mules are hybrid animals, resulting from the mating of a male donkey (jack) and a female horse (mare), there are male and female mules; however, they are sterile and cannot reproduce³⁷. According to Mitchell³⁸, donkeys and their hybrid offsprings played a relevant role in human beings' conflicts, even before horses were used to pull wagons.

Mules are smaller than horses, and at the same time they "are more robust and their back is flatter"³⁹. They also show more resistance, being animals able to develop long marches covering dozens of kilometers a day,

³³ GEST, Kevin. *As origens e a história das ordens de cavalaria*. São Paulo: Madras, 2012.

³⁴ *Ibid.* p. 22.

³⁵ DIMARCO, Louis A. *War Horse*. Westholme Publishing, 2008.

³⁶ DIAMOND, Jared. *Armas, germes e aço*. Rio de Janeiro: Record, 2010. p. 89.

³⁷ HAMEISTER, Martha Daisson. *O continente do Rio Grande de São Pedro: os homens, suas redes de relações e suas mercadorias semoventes (c.1727-1763)*. 2002. Dissertação (Mestrado)–Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Sociais, UFRJ, Rio de Janeiro, 2002.

³⁸ MITCHELL, Peter. *The donkey in human history: an archaeological perspective*. Oxford University Press, 2018.

³⁹ BORGES, Luiz Adriano. *Mulas em movimento. O mercado interno brasileiro e o negócio de tropas, primeira metade do século XIX. Anos 90: Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação em História da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul*, v. 23, n. 44, p. 207-230, 2016. p. 209.

even on hilly terrains without getting exhausted. Historically, the biological advantage of mules is their capability of carrying weight. For example, a horse can carry up to 115 kilograms, while a mule load can range between 135 and 225 kilograms⁴⁰. In the famous Battle of Plateia, in 479 BCE, Sidnell⁴¹ recorded that the Greeks had their troop of 500 mules, which were loaded with their supplies, stopped by the Persian cavalry⁴².

This brief historical overview shows that the existing relation between animals and human conflicts evolved over time. Considering the classification of modern conflicts set by Lind⁴³, there are records of animals in first (1648-1860) and second generation (up to World War I) wars. Considering the possibilities of use of force, those two types of conflict have in common the absence of motor vehicles, armored vehicles, and planes, which appeared in the third war generation and whose typical example is World War II (1939-1945). The Federalist Revolution of 1893, object of this study, is situated in the late second-generation wars, still marked by the presence of animals in the conflict. With the technological advancement in the international system, a remarkable transition occurred, and animals were no longer used as the driving force of conflicts, being substituted with more effective equipment and processes in both the battlefield and the logistics sphere.

The insurgency of 1893

The civil war of 1893, also known as Federalist Revolution, involved the three states in Southern Brazil and lasted from February 1893 to August 1895⁴⁴. That was a conflict developed in the context of the early years of the Republic, marked by political unrest and competition for power by different groups in Rio Grande do Sul⁴⁵. The most remarkable characteristic of that war, which spread to Santa Catarina and Paraná in the late 1893 was the practice

⁴⁰ BORGES, Luiz Adriano. Mulas em movimento. O mercado interno brasileiro e o negócio de tropas, primeira metade do século XIX. Anos 90: Revista do Programa de Pós-Graduação em História da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, v. 23, n. 44, p. 207-230, 2016.

⁴¹ SIDNELL, Philip. Warhorse: Cavalry in ancient warfare. A&C Black, 2006.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ LIND, William. Understanding Fourth Generation War. Military Review, p. 12-16, Sep-Oct. 2004.

⁴⁴ AXT, Gunter. A Revolução Federalista (1893-1895): guerra civil no Brasil. R. IHGB, Rio de Janeiro, a. 179 (477):107-136, Mai./Ago. 2018; DAMIN, Cláudio Júnior. 1893, Sangue na Lagoa Vermelha: Episódios da Revolução Federalista no Rio Grande do Sul. Porto Alegre: Editora Martins Livreiro, 2023.

⁴⁵ FRANCO, Sérgio da Costa. Júlio de Castilhos e sua época. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2013; FLORES, Moacyr; FLORES, Hilda Agnes Hubner. Revolução Federalista. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2016.

of beheading the opponents, which made it one of the cruelest events in Brazilian history⁴⁶.

That was an irregular conflict, characterized by an insurgency that sought to substitute the existing order by using violence and challenging the established institutions⁴⁷. According to Galula's⁴⁸ report, the insurgency, which for him is also a type of civil war, is always asymmetric between insurgents (less powerful) and counterinsurgents (linked to the *status quo* and owning more power resources). Such initial unbalance in the conflict is what makes it different from a conventional war between states.

The start of the insurgency, with the first combats in February 1893, occurred on the borders with Uruguay and Argentina⁴⁹. Those regions, which Félix⁵⁰ (1996) called the *Fronteira Sul* and *Campanha* zones, were characterized by the presence of a powerful group of cattle owners, members of the Federalist Party (FP), which opposed the government of the state by Júlio de Castilhos, who belonged to the Republican Party of Rio-Grande (RRP). The civil leader of the insurgents was the former empire counsellor Gaspar Silveira Martins, while the main military Leaders were general João Nunes da Silva Tavares (Joca Tavares), a large farmer from Bagé; and Gumercindo Saraiva, from Santa Vitória do Palmar. During the monarchy, that region had been the one that showed greatest identification with the Liberal Party, led by the politician Silveira Martins⁵¹.

The insurgency involved basically “highly militarized border society” as described by, Chasteen⁵², which supplied officers who had deserted the National Army, members of the National Guard, pawns, and aggregates from the cattle farms to create the initial formation of the Revolutionary Army, the irregular force of insurgents, who were also called *maragatos*. When the war affected other regions, the local elites that belonged to the FP and had been excluded from the administration of the state and the municipalities, joined

⁴⁶ D'AVILA, Ney Eduardo Possapp. *Degola e degoladores no Rio Grande do Sul (1889-1930)*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2012; MARIANO, Nilson. *Um tal de Adão Latorre A Degola na Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2019.

⁴⁷ MOREIRA, Earle Macarthy. 1893: Uma reflexão sobre a Revolução. In: ALVES, Francisco das Neves; TORRES, Luiz Henrique. *Pensar a Revolução Federalista*. Rio Grande: Editora da Furg, 1993.

⁴⁸ GALULA, David. *Counterinsurgency warfare: theory and practice*. Greenwood Publishing Group, 2006.

⁴⁹ REVERBEL, Carlos. *Maragatos e Pica-Paus*. Porto Alegre: L&PM, 1985.

⁵⁰ FÉLIX, Loiva Otero. *Coronelismo, borgismo e cooptação política*. Porto Alegre: Editora da UFRGS, 1996.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² CHASTEEN, John. *Fronteira Rebelde*. Porto Alegre: Movimento, 2003. p. 63.

the armed fight, including practically the whole territory of Rio Grande do Sul in the conflict.

The counterinsurgents, in turn, were represented by the positivist Júlio de Castilhos, president of the state and sole leader of the RRP. As reported by Love⁵³, the force of the republican leaders was concentrated in Porto Alegre, on the coast, and in the mountainous region. Those regions presented economic and social features different from those found in the area where the jerked beef producers had their properties, that is Fronteira and Campanha. Greater insertion was also observed in the plateau region “where cattle was bred in smaller properties and certain crop diversification was also seen”⁵⁴.

Those allied to Castilhos held the absolute control of the bureaucracy of the state, including the coercive forces, and the federal government support, led by Floriano Peixoto, who was also targeted by the revolutionaries. Therefore, access to any public position required alignment to the official party⁵⁵. In practice, the city halls, which collected the taxes and were districts formed by judges and prosecutors, police stations and registry offices, working in the municipalities were in the hands of Júlio de Castilhos’s allies⁵⁶, regardless of the region where they were located.

The president of the state was also the commander in chief of the Military Brigade, a regular institution that had been created before the start of the war and that was used as the armed branch of the positivism in Rio Grande do Sul against the insurgent federalists⁵⁷. With a reduced number of members, they joined the “defense of the Republic”, which was the slogan of those allied to Castilhos and groups formed by the National Guard (civil force) from all districts. That group along with representatives of the National Army based in Rio Grande do Sul and some from other states were dislocated to that region to defend the permanence of Floriano Peixoto in power. Even the War Minister, general Moura, came from Rio de Janeiro and set his headquarter in Porto Alegre to command the operations⁵⁸.

⁵³ LOVE, Joseph. Reflections on the Revolution of 1893. In: ALVES, Francisco das Neves; TORRES, Luiz Henrique. *Pensar a Revolução Federalista*. Rio Grande: Editora da Furg, 1993.

⁵⁴ FONSECA, Pedro Cezar Dutra. *Revolução Federalista: uma interpretação*. In: ALVES, Francisco das Neves; TORRES, Luiz Henrique. *Pensar a Revolução Federalista*. Rio Grande: Editora da Furg, 1993. p. 23.

⁵⁵ RODRIGUEZ, Ricardo Vélez. *Castilhismo: uma filosofia da República*. Brasília: Editora do Senado, 2000.

⁵⁶ FRANCO, Sérgio da Costa. *Júlio de Castilhos e sua época*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2013.

⁵⁷ SIMÕES, Moacir Almeida. *História da Brigada Militar*. Porto Alegre: Polost/APESP, 2002.

⁵⁸ DIÁRIO DE NOTÍCIAS. *Jornal Diário de Notícias*. Rio de Janeiro, 25-04-1893.

The reading and analysis of the chronicles and registers of the conflict, both republican⁵⁹ and federalists⁶⁰, allow the conclusion that the war developed marked by the continuous march of the groups of combatants, as if one side was hunting the other. That was a war in movement, that is, there was no fixed base. They organized provisional camping areas inside the forests, which explains the practice of beheading as a way of not keeping war prisoners, since there were no fixed army barracks.

A significant event, which was characteristic of this war dynamics was the Gumerindo Saraiva's march, which presented an irregular force formed by hundreds of officers and thousands of lower-ranked soldiers and crossed Rio Grande do Sul following the West-East direction, went through the frontier with the state of Santa Catarina in the late 1893, and took over the state of Paraná in the early 1894. Due to the lack of conditions to advance to Rio de Janeiro to depose Floriano, they were forced to return to Rio Grande do Sul in May 1894. In August, when moving to the Western board, Gumerindo ended up being shot and died⁶¹. Throughout the thousands of kilometers covered, the insurgents were chased by the military forces of Castilhos, mainly the Northern Division, which owned the highest number of troops and arms, and the Center Division⁶².

From Julio de Castilhos's standpoint, the *maragatos* represented an existential and able threat to the republicans of Rio Grande do Sul and could erode the republican regime installed in 1889. At the end of this episode, as in most insurgencies, either urban or rural, the federalists were not able to remove Castilhos and Floriano from power. However, they managed, even facing the asymmetry of financial and military resources, and even after the death of their main general, Gumerindo Saraiva, keep a civil war for thirty months. Such a long conflict period, in such adverse conditions,

⁵⁹PILAR, Fabrício. *Memórias da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2021; COUTINHO, Albino José Ferreira. *Marcha da Divisão do Norte*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2011; CARVALHO, Pedro. *A campanha do coronel Santos Filho: Revolução Federalista de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Correio do Povo, 1897; LIMA, José Carvalho. *Narrativas Militares: A Revolução do Rio Grande do Sul*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2014; BORMANN, General J. B.. *Dias Fratricidas: Memórias da Revolução Federalista no Estado do Paraná*. Curitiba: Typografia da Livraria Economica, 1906, Volume III.

⁶⁰ DOURADO, Ângelo. *Voluntários do Martírio: narrativa da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2020; GRABOWSKI, Francisco. *Memória da Revolução Brasileira dos Anos de 1893-94*. In: *Anais da Comunidade Brasileiro-Polonesa*. Curitiba: Superintendência do Centenário da Imigração Polonesa no Paraná, 1971, Volume V; PRESTES GUIMARÃES, Antônio Ferreira. *A Revolução Federalista em Cima da Serra (1892-1895)*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro Editor, 1987.

⁶¹ DORNELLES, Sejanos. *Gumerindo Saraiva: o guerrilheiro pampeano: Caxias do Sul*: EDUCS, 1988.

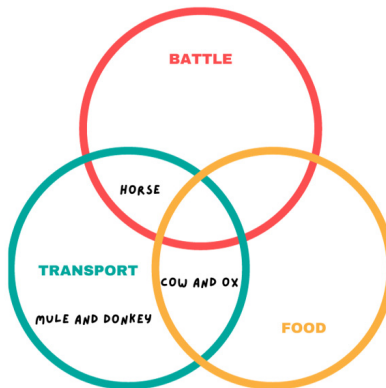
⁶² COUTINHO, Albino José Ferreira. *Marcha da Divisão do Norte*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2011.

was particularly possible due to the extensive use of some types of animals, all historically lined to Rio Grande do Sul society and economy, which contributed decisively to keep the revolutionary flame, and at the same time, the counterinsurgency by Castilhos' supporters.

Animals in the civil war

The presence of five basic animals was recorded in the 1893 military campaign, namely, horses, oxen, cows, mules, and donkeys. They were used, in addition to the two categories of uses described by Kistler⁶³ (combat and support) to feed the troops on both sides of the conflict. One of these groups of animals might have contributed to two functions at the same time, due to their characteristics, as shown below (Figure I).

Figure I – Use of animals in the Federalist Revolution of 1893



Source: the authors.

The cow, is found in two circles, that is, food and transport. The same occurs with the ox, mainly when castrated and presenting the same size as that of the cows. According to De Laytano⁶⁴, meat has historically been “the greatest food concern of the people from Rio Grande do Sul”, becoming a fundamental item in their diet. More than nutrition, cattle raising

⁶³ KISTLER, John M. *Animals in the Military: From Hannibal's Elephants to the Dolphins of the US Navy*. ABC-CLIO, 2011.

⁶⁴ DE LAYTANO, Dante. A alimentação do gaúcho brasileiro. *Ciência & Trópico*, v. 8, n. 2, 1980. p. 138.

had a decisive socioeconomic and military influence in the formation and development of that state. As pointed out by Pesavento⁶⁵:

Raising cattle had been the predominant activity in Rio Grande do Sul from the beginning of the state up to the period being analyzed [first decades of the 20th century]. First, the possibility of owning land was created through war and usurpation, legitimating the performance of the head of the warrior group and/or the cattle drivers, when receiving a letter of *sesmaria* (land donation document). Those groups, which settled and set up the cattle breeding farms formed the central pillar of the traditional southern families. Therefore, family clans, which in the local context were in a situation of prominence regarding the land and cattle monopoly resulting from the fight against the Castellanos, were legitimated by the Portuguese crown. Thus, the possession of land and cattle was the fundamental element that marked the link of the newly born elite with the state, which was firstly the Portuguese crown, and later the Brazilian empire.

The narrated process developed in the region of Western and Southern borders, that is, neighboring the La Plata basin countries and the oldest settlements of the Rio Grande do Sul territory, originating the phenomenon called “farming-military cycle” by Félix⁶⁶. The owners of cattle breeding farms “performed the task of defending the borders”, and, at the same time “occupied administrative positions”, thus structuring, “bonds of solidarity between the land and cattle owners of Rio Grande do Sul and the state”⁶⁷.

On the border region, the cattle breeding economy evolved into the jerked beef farmers and in the second half of the 20th century allowed the installation of slaughterhouses, which aggregated value to the meat⁶⁸. Such trajectory was not observed in other regions of the state, and municipalities such as Lagoa Vermelha and Vacaria, which also had a cattle-based economy, but did not implement jerked beef industries before or after 1893.

⁶⁵ PESAVENTO, Sandra Jatahy. *Pecuária e indústria; formas de realização do capitalismo na sociedade gaúcha do século XIX*. 1. ed. Porto alegre: Movimento, 1986. v. 1. p. 15.

⁶⁶ FÉLIX, Loiva Otero. *Coronelismo, borgismo e cooptação política*. Porto Alegre: Editora da UFRGS, 1996.

⁶⁷ PESAVENTO, Sandra Jatahy. *Pecuária e indústria; formas de realização do capitalismo na sociedade gaúcha do século XIX*. 1. ed. Porto alegre: Movimento, 1986. v. 1. p. 15.

⁶⁸ PESAVENTO, Sandra Jatahy. *República Velha Gaúcha: charqueadas, frigoríficos e criadores*. Montevideo: IEL, 1980.

According to the territory classification put forward by Félix⁶⁹, Lagoa Vermelha and Vacaria belonged to the Central Plateau. Their economy was predominantly grassland farming, cattle breeding and selling. However, they also dedicated to some kind of agricultural activity, mainly in the production of mate and some grain crops. The colonization of that territory had been more recent, and started with the settlement of cattle riders from São Paulo, who founded some farms in Cruz Alta, Vacaria and Passo Fundo. Lagoa Vermelha, for example, neighboring Vacaria, was founded in the 1840, after the Farroupilha Revolution⁷⁰.

In the past, this region, which is also known as Campos de Cima da Serra, was disputed by the kingdoms of Portugal and Spain, for being located in the eastern limit of the Jesuit-Guarani reductions⁷¹. In 1712, it was “conquered and populated with cattle” by the Castellano priests, who introduced 80 thousand animals⁷². Such enterprise was called Vacaria dos Pinhais, a cattle reserve used by the Jesuits to protect part of the herds against the expeditions coming from São Paulo, Portuguese invasions, and enemy indigenous tribes⁷³. For some time, the animals were isolated, reproduced and increased the herds until 1729, when the Portuguese invaders opened a new way to reach the cattle in the interior of Vacaria and started the looting⁷⁴.

In the last decade of the 19th century, the wild cattle of the forests and fields of that region had disappeared. All animals, according to the law of the time, should be marked on the skin with the identification of their owners. This was fundamental to locate the animals that had been stolen and also because the cattle at that time was still bred using the primitive method of *pabulação*. As described by Vert⁷⁵, that method consisted in “letting the cattle graze freely on natural fields, and grow with very little intervention, exposed day and night” to the local climate. There was another relevant issue, which

⁶⁹ FÉLIX, Loiva Otero. *Coronelismo, borgismo e cooptação política*. Porto Alegre: Editora da UFRGS, 1996.

⁷⁰ BRANCO, Pércio de Moraes. *A região de Lagoa Vermelha: aspectos históricos*. Porto Alegre: EST, 2002.

⁷¹ CAFRUNI, Jorge. *Passo Fundo das Missões: estudo histórico do período jesuítico*. Passo Fundo: Municipalidade de Passo Fundo, 1966.

⁷² DUARTE, Manoel. *A irrupção de 1779, em Los Pinares*. In: *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico do Rio Grande do Sul*. Ano XX, IV Trimestre – Dezembro 1940, número 80. p. 327.

⁷³ CAFRUNI, Jorge. *Passo Fundo das Missões: estudo histórico do período jesuítico*. Passo Fundo: Municipalidade de Passo Fundo, 1966.

⁷⁴ DUARTE, Manoel. *Transadores e Retirantes*. In: *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico do Rio Grande do Sul*. Ano XXI, III Trimestre – Setembro 1941, número 83.

⁷⁵ VERT, Germano. *O gado e a lavoura: esboço de economia rural*. Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1900. p. 9.

was the difficulty to fence the breeding field, due to its size, making the task of herding the cattle even more complex.

Cattle herds were deeply harmed by the civil war, and a reduction was observed from seven million existing animals in 1889 to three million just after the conflict⁷⁶. This data reveals the revolution period impact on the animals, so that this “resource” was exhausted in two and half years of revolution.

Both sides, the government and *maragatos*’ troops were fully dependent on the cattle meat to continue the war, since that was the main item in the combatants’ diet.

The columns formed by the infantry, cavalry, and artillery marched along with the herds. In May 1894, when the Gumercindo army left Paraná and crossed Santa Catarina heading to Rio Grande do Sul, at the Dona Anna location on the banks of the Uruguay river, on the border of Campos Novos and Lagoa Vermelha, they could not make the animals cross that river. On that occasion, 500 animals were left on the Santa Catarina side, according to the official telegram sent by senator Pinheiro Machado, republican commander of the North Division⁷⁷. In his logbook, the federalist major Vicente Ferreira de Castro, who accompanied Gumercindo from Ponta Grossa in the state of Paraná, recorded that “it was sad to see the number of animals that were left tied on the other side of the river”⁷⁸.

Moments of greater difficulty in terms of survival during the war are related to the reduced amount or complete lack of beef. Captain Ângelo Dourado (2020), head of the *maragatos*’ health department and one of Gumercindo’s right hand men, recorded in his logbook that after crossing the Uruguay river, where the cattle was left behind, they faced starvation. On the mountain of the Forquilha River, in Lake territory, inside the forest and under constant rain, they had almost no food, even if the region was inhabited by the Caingangs indigenous tribes and some farmers. That military officer wrote that he and his men had spent over twenty-four hours without any food, and when they found some mulberry trees in the forest, they tried to reduce the hunger with them. However, after two hours eating that fruit,

⁷⁶MEIRA, Antonio Gonçalves; CABEDA, Coralio. *Nossas Guerras: considerações históricas dos seus recursos*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2009;

⁷⁷BORMANN, General J. B. Dias *Fratricidas: Memórias da Revolução Federalista no Estado do Paraná*. Curitiba: Typografia da Livraria Economica, 1906, Volume III.

⁷⁸RIBAS, Vasco José Taborda. *A gente paranaense na Revolução Federalista*. In: *Fontes para a história da revolução de 1893: proceedings of the seminar held in Bagé, from 12 to 15 November 1983*. Bagé: URCAMP, 1990. p. 205.

which abounded in that place, Dourado (2020, p. 229) states that “he felt the same hunger pang”.

Hunger was also felt by the so-called *pica-paus* (woodpeckers, they were named after that bird due to the color of their uniform that resembled the color of the bird’s feathers) of the North Division, due to the absolute lack of beef. After the republicans crossed the border with Santa Catarina, going through Vacaria, in the late 1893, famine only intensified. For many days of march, for example, the only food available to the troops was “a tiny piece of meat, without salt or flour”⁷⁹. This situation resulted in desperate actions, such as the case in which soldiers started to eat “pieces of the leather softened in boiling water”, that is, some of the horses’ harness and shoe parts⁸⁰.

In his combat logbook, the lieutenant-colonel Fabrício Pilar, commander of a military brigade regiment, detailed on 08th January 1894, when he was in Santa Catarina, the catastrophic situation of his troops “it was rather disturbing to see some of the weaker soldiers worn out and debilitated by hunger sitting on the road for being unable to continue the march!”⁸¹. However, when the cows arrived at the camps, they could not end the starvation. At the time, 34 animals were brought from a farm and were supposed to feed the North Division contingent of 3,000 men for three days⁸². At the war time, when a cow was slaughtered, it would provide food for 65 to 70 soldiers on average, which evidences the seriousness of the meat shortage. Each soldier was fed a quarter of the amount they would commonly be fed. Another report describes the arrival of “four oxen”, male castrated animals, which were “killed and used to feed 1,200 men”⁸³.

This shows that the cattle had such an influence in the men involved in that conflict that was existential. The absence or scarcity of animals meant hard times for the human beings since they were completely dependent on the meat for their daily diet. Without such diet, there was hunger and pain, which produced inefficiency since the army could not perform an offensive strategy due to the lack of nutrients for their soldiers and officers. This emphasizes the cattle influence and the animal agency in the human beings’ actions going beyond their typical function of becoming food.

⁷⁹ COUTINHO. Albino José Ferreira. *Marcha da Divisão do Norte*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2011. p. 132.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* p. 132.

⁸¹ PILAR, Fabrício. *Memórias da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2021. p. 123.

⁸² COUTINHO. Albino José Ferreira. *Marcha da Divisão do Norte*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2011.

⁸³ COUTINHO. Albino José Ferreira. *Marcha da Divisão do Norte*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2011. p. 133.

The native cattle herds disappeared during the civil war, due to the predatory appropriation by the insurgents and counterinsurgents, and due to the lack of a reflection on the consequences of such indiscriminate looting of rural properties. The typical method of this extraction was to gather the animals found on the fields or in paddocks and make them march with the troops without the consent of their owners. This was a type of theft that impacted all cattle breeders in the state. The Castilhos's supporter Fabrício Pilar, for example, recorded in his logbook that in the morning of 21st October 1893, when his troops were half a mile from the Lagoa Vermelha Village, enemy groups were seen. That was the troop commanded by Cezário Saraiva, Gumercindo's feared cousin, who "brought around two hundred animals gathered from the place called Barracão", on the border with Santa Catarina⁸⁴.

Also in October 1893, due to the threat that the Revolutionary Army would cross to Santa Catarina, Júlio de Castilhos ordered that the "cavalry of Lages" remained "concentrated next to the Cerquinhas stream or moved to the municipality of Vacaria". This aimed to protect the animals from being stolen by the insurgents⁸⁵. It seems relevant to mention that not only cattle (cow and ox) were prospected by the revolutionaries, but also other kinds of animals such as horses.

Officers supporting Castilhos also imposed some requests and gathered cattle and horses that were private property, this method was called '*potreada*'. The enemy *maragatos* were not the only target. There is a paradigmatic account related to Maria Eufrasia Justina, lieutenant-colonel Heleodoro de Moraes Branco's mother. He was the authority in Lagoa Vermelha and she was a large land owner that was extremely affected by the animal forced request, even being the mother of the highest republican leader in the municipality. She and other cattle breeders filed a claim with the National Treasury after the revolution, in which they claimed compensation for the cattle taken from their properties during the civil war⁸⁶. A reduction of 767 animals including mares, mules, donkeys, horses, and cows was recorded in their properties. A record of 300 feral mares and 270 mules was found. Those forced requests occurred on 19th October 1893, when the North Division went through Lagoa

⁸⁴ PILAR, Fabrício. *Memórias da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2021. p. 94.

⁸⁵ JORNAL DO BRASIL. *Jornal do Brasil*. Rio de Janeiro, 20-06-1895.

⁸⁶ CARTÓRIO DE NOTAS. *Livro do Cartório de Notas de Lagoa Vermelha de 7 de agosto de 1897 a março de 1898*. Lagoa Vermelha, 1898. Retrieved from: [Arquivo Público do Rio Grande do Sul](http://arquivo-publico-do-rio-grande-do-sul.gov.br/). p. 61.

Vermelha, 02nd April and 20th June 1894, and were all taken by the “legal forces commanded by general Francisco Rodrigues Lima”, the Division commander⁸⁷.

Those hundreds of animals taken resulted in great financial loss. Based on an inventory of the Revolution time, a feral mare and a reproduction cow would cost 20 thousand reis (Brazilian currency at the time) each⁸⁸. An adult horse would cost twice this value, that is, 40 thousand reis. A donkey would be even more valued, 50 thousand reis, due to its function of carrying all types of loads. We could not find a reference value for feral or domesticated mules, but since they performed a similar function to that of the donkeys, for being their female version, we imagine that their mean value would also be around 50 thousand reis. The total estimated loss was 24 thousand 600 reis, which was considered a fortune at the time. There is no register that the mother of the authority of Lagoa Vermelha managed to be compensated for the animals taken during the war.

Such register of the inventory by Maria Mafalda de Lima, resident of Lagoa Vermelha, indicates a distinct market value for the animals that took part in the war. They were treated as goods; some were more valuable than others taking into consideration their functions and availability for the work on the battlefield. Cows were charged less since they outnumbered the other animals and their function was related to the individuals' diet; thus, a horse or a mule would cost twice as much as a cow.

It seems relevant to notice, however, that in the war environment, those animals were equally important and influent since the fight could not continue without the cows to feed the troops or the horses to support the battles, which reduced the monetary differences found in the capitalist system. Even though, human beings made choices that created hierarchies among the animals at times of great need. For example, when deciding whether they should abandon a cow or a horse, they would choose the former to be abandoned.

Those forced requests, needed to keep the war, impoverished the cattle breeder elites of the time. In Lagoa Vermelha, the lieutenant João Mariano Pimentel, one of the greatest cattle breeders of the region and supporter of the federalists, but who was not linked to the insurgency, was beheaded in November 1894, inside the *maragato* property close to the municipality urban

⁸⁷ Ibid. p. 61.

⁸⁸ INVENTÁRIO. Inventário de Dona Maria Mafalda de Lima. Lagoa Vermelha, 1896. Retrieved from: Arquivo Público do Rio Grande do Sul.

zone, left only 50 “reproduction cows” as a heritage. This was an insignificant number considering the thousands of hectares he owned⁸⁹.

Oxen were used for food and transportation. Vert⁹⁰ developed a study on rural economy and highlighted that oxen “were slower”, however “more patient and less demanding”, they could be used to “plough the land, to pull a horse or loaded wagons on rough paths like most of the rural ways”. Those were animals destined to heavy work and thus their presence at war was registered.

In May 1894, when Gumerindo’s army returned to Rio Grande do Sul, the heavy artillery transported on wagons was pulled by oxen. Ângelo Dourado⁹¹ pointed out that “the oxen got tired and for this reason” the artillery pieces had to be abandoned on the path. In addition to transporting weapons, those animals were also used by both sides of the conflict to transport ammunition, food, and supplies. They also pulled the ambulance and the wagon transporting individuals that were wounded or ill. It seems relevant to emphasize that there is no register of any concern with the wellbeing of those animals, since they worked until they were completely exhausted and there were no other animals to substitute them throughout the marches.

The main function of mules and donkeys was to provide transport due to their huge resistance and capability to carry hundreds of kilos on their back. Mules, in the region of Lagoa Vermelha and Vacaria, were part of what can be called the cattle driving economy, which resulted in the creation of several towns in the Campos de Cima da Serra region, whose territory was part of the mule drivers’ route that traveled towards the Sorocaba market in São Paulo. Silva⁹² pointed out that the “foundation, and economic, social, and cultural organization” of Lagoa Vermelha was “to a great extent linked to the cattle driving activity on the producer farms, in the commercialization and use of those animals”. As already mentioned, a mule or donkey was highly valued at the time of the civil war due to its genetics and transport abilities.

⁸⁹ INVENTÁRIO. Processo de inventário de João Mariano Pimentel. Lagoa Vermelha, 1895. Disponível no Arquivo Público do Rio Grande do Sul; DAMIN, Cláudio Júnior. 1893, *Sangue na Lagoa Vermelha: Episódios da Revolução Federalista no Rio Grande do Sul*. Porto Alegre: Editora Martins Livreiro, 2023.

⁹⁰ VERT, Germano. *O gado e a lavoura: esboço de economia rural*. Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1900. p. 5-6.

⁹¹ DOURADO, Ângelo. *Voluntários do Martírio: narrativa da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2020. p. 221.

⁹² SILVA, Itací de Souza. *Tropeirismo e criatórios de mulas em Lagoa Vermelha, nordeste do RS (1914-1955)*. Dissertação de Mestrado, Universidade de Passo Fundo, 2011. p. 13.

In January 1894, when the North Division was crossing Santa Catarina chasing the revolutionary groups, mules carried the ammunition. Those animals were used up to complete exhaustion and after that, the soldiers had to carry the gun and artillery bullets⁹³. In May 1894, when crossing the Uruguay river, when the insurgents had to abandon hundreds of cows and oxen on the Santa Catarina side, because making the animals cross the 150 meters of that river would be a chaotic and time consuming activity, priority was given to horses, mules, and donkeys because they were vital for the movement of the troops in the forest of the Forquilha river mountain.

It seems relevant to emphasize the recurrent report of intake of donkey and mule meat. This was recorded by Ângelo Dourado⁹⁴ in his logbook as follows: “most mates already eat donkey meat”, he also observed that “this is not the fat meat of an animal that is slaughtered for food, in fact, it is the meat of animals that died of exhaustion”. The hard times of the war, mainly after the reduction of cows in the soldiers’ diet, led to this desperate measure of consuming any meat available, even if it was a dead donkey. However, mules and donkeys were not regularly used for food, that was not their main or accessory function, it only occurred in cases of extreme necessity. People from Rio Grande do Sul do not commonly eat the meat of these animals. Those specific herds were reduced from 120 thousand animals before the war to 110 thousand after the conflict⁹⁵.

The last animal to be analyzed in the article is the horse, whose functions in the civil war were combat and transport. Those animals belonged to a group that was closely linked to the territory and inhabitants in Southern Brazil. Cafruni⁹⁶ explained that the Castellano priests of the Companhia de Jesus, who had been working the region since 1626, “moved from a reduction to another on horseback, thus Jesuits were the first horsemen, who, chronologically, drove those animals throughout Rio Grande”. On Southern and Western borders, as observed by Chasteen⁹⁷, cattle breeding demanded

⁹³ COUTINHO, Albino José Ferreira. *Marcha da Divisão do Norte*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2011.p. 131.

⁹⁴ DOURADO, Ângelo. *Voluntários do Martírio: narrativa da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2020. p. 296.

⁹⁵ MEIRA, Antonio Gonçalves; CABEDA, Coralio. *Nossas Guerras: considerações históricas dos seus recursos*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2009.

⁹⁶ CAFRUNI, Jorge. *Passo Fundo das Missões: estudo histórico do período jesuítico*. Passo Fundo: Municipalidade de Passo Fundo, 1966. p. 140.

⁹⁷ CHASTEEN, John. *Fronteira Rebelde*. Porto Alegre: Movimento, 2003. p. 118.

the development of equestrian skills by the owners, slaves, and temporary and permanent workers, making the “rural population a natural fast brigade”.

Day after day, horse and horseman performed fast body movements to restrain or guide the stampede of herds, and horses learned to perform complex movements to deceive or scape from oxen with long sharp horns, responding to a subtle pressure of the horseman’s legs⁹⁸.

This shows that the field work determined the use of horses that were also used in the war to defend the borders, if necessary. The men who lived in that region had been involved in the breeding activity from the very beginning and were considered excellent horse riders and, for this reason, during the insurgency showed great ability to deal with spears, swords, and rifles on horseback without losing their balance⁹⁹. According to one of their biographers, Gumercindo Saraiva, and his brother Aparício, for example, learned everything about the life on the farm and work on the field from their father when they were still little boys¹⁰⁰. The future *maragato* revolutionaries also learned while they were very young how to rope animals, take care of horses and cure their diseases, choose the fattest cow to be slaughtered, produce and handle *boleaderas* (bolas), and drive animals to distant destinations.

The combatants that threw spears under the command of Aparício Saraiva were famous in the civil war. They fought on horseback and showed great skills when handling spears, which could be a fatal weapon if well handled. Spears were the typical weapon of Aparício’s horseman, and he also appeared in several moments participating in battles using only this weapon¹⁰¹.

Minssen¹⁰² studied horses in Rio Grande do Sul and highlighted their “sobriety and roughness”, determined by their hybrid nature, which included several breeds, and also by the conditions in which those animals were bred. The Gaucho (originated in Rio Grande do Sul) horse would stand “extremely cold winds in winter”, “prolonged rainfall”, and the “scorching sun in

⁹⁸ CHASTEEN, John. *Fronteira Rebelde*. Porto Alegre: Movimento, 2003. p. 118-119.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ DORNELLES, Sejanos. *Gumersindo Saraiva: o guerrilheiro pampeano: Caxias do Sul*: EDUCS, 1988.

¹⁰¹ DOURADO, Ângelo. *Voluntários do Martírio: narrativa da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2020.

¹⁰² MINNSEN, Guilherme. *O cavalo no Rio Grande do Sul: memórias apresentadas no Primeiro Congresso da Federação das Associações Rurais*. Pelotas: Imprensa da Livraria Americana, 1910. p. 6.

summer”, and was also brave. All these qualities were “invaluable for the war horse and for the work on the breeding farms”¹⁰³.

For those on Castilhos’ side and for the *maragatos* as well, horses were a fundamental war weapon. As pointed out by captain Ângelo Dourado¹⁰⁴, “our force is in the cavalry, we can only fight the war with them”. The permanent need to steal and make forced requests of horses was observed throughout the war. After the number of animals on the field reduced due to the animals lost in battles, being on horseback became a privilege of the revolutionaries and government defenders that belonged to the high hierarchy of the war. Without horses, the number of infantry soldiers increased, slowing down the army dislocation.

In Lagoa Vermelha and Vacaria, there were cavalry troops of the District National Guard, which took part in the warfare supporting the governor Júlio de Castilhos. The 1st Regiment of the Military Brigade Cavalry operated in that region between 1893 and 1894. It was commanded by the lieutenant-colonel Fabrício Pilar and was considered an elite troop, but at a certain point they also suffered due to the lack of horses.

It seems relevant to mention that the republicans knew that their enemies’ animals were better than those belonging to the troops supporting the government, even at the beginning of the war.

On 21st October 1893, Fabrício Pilar¹⁰⁵ recorded in his logbook that at eight in the morning, when this cavalry regiment was half a mile far from the Lagoa Vermelha Village, on the way to Vacaria chasing the Revolutionary Army that moved fast toward the Santa Catarina border, “an enemy troop appeared in our field, it was led by Cezario Saravia, a cousin of the famous bandit Gomercindo”. They were, as mentioned before, collecting animals in Barracão. Pilar informed that a persecution was organized joining the North Division and the Military Brigade, but it was unsuccessful. “We chased them for a long time; however, we did not manage to reach them because of our animals and skills, their horses and horsemen were better than ours”, revealed Castilhos’ supporter¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰³ Ibid. p. 6.

¹⁰⁴ DOURADO, Ângelo. Voluntários do Martírio: narrativa da Revolução de 1893. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2020. p. 56.

¹⁰⁵ PILAR, Fabrício. Memórias da Revolução de 1893. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2021. p. 94.

¹⁰⁶ PILAR, Fabrício. Memórias da Revolução de 1893. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2021. p. 94.

In Vacaria in June 1894, the shortage of horses became a tough reality, exactly when the village was invaded by the forces of colonel Demétrio José Ramos, one of the main insurgent leaders in the Campos de Cima da Serra. In that episode, the urban center of the municipality, as confirmed by major Avelino Paim de Souza, local authority and one of the military leaders, “was completely unprotected”¹⁰⁷. When Avelino was informed of the attack, he was 30km away and was unable to reach the enemies because they were much better served by their animals than the Castilhos’ forces, whose cavalry was in poor conditions.

At the end of the war, a letter sent in March 1895 by captain Paulo Alves de Souza Marques, commander of the 38th column of the National Guard of Lagoa Vermelha, to lieutenant-colonel Avelino Paim de Souza, head of the legalist forces of Vacaria, informed that the situation of the local forces was precarious. The insurgents remained pressing the region; however, the captain informed that he had no conditions to promote more defensive actions. The reason for that was “my entire force does not have twenty good animals, that is, in conditions to perform”, wrote the officer¹⁰⁸.

On the *maragato* side, during the dramatic return of the revolutionaries from Paraná to Rio Grande do Sul, in May 1894, Ângelo Dourado¹⁰⁹ wrote in his logbook that Aparício Saraiva’s troop, which had left Ponta Grossa with around two thousand men, arrived in Campos Novos, from where they would get the path that led to the Uruguay river and cross it, with less than one thousand men and “without horses fit for the battle”. Torquato Severo, one of Gumercindo’s most important leaders, reported that “due to the lack of horses, all spear handlers had to be transformed into shooters”¹¹⁰.

Here we find again the example of animals influencing human beings’ actions and, in particular, the war development. Without enough horses, their strategies had to be altered due to troop mobility difficulties, for example. Going after the enemies without horses was also purposeless. Thus, horses

¹⁰⁷ A FEDERAÇÃO. *Jornal A Federação*. Porto Alegre, 22-09-1894.

¹⁰⁸ SOUZA MARQUES, Paulo Alves de. Correspondence of 20th March 1895 from captain Paulo Alves de Souza Marques to lieutenant-colonel Avelino Paim de Souza. Instituto Histórico e Geográfico do Rio Grande do Sul, 1895. *Pasta Vacaria na Revolução Federalista de 1893*. p. 1.

¹⁰⁹ DOURADO, Ângelo. *Voluntários do Martírio: narrativa da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2020. p. 225.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 249.

were seen to be relevant historical agents. According to Shaw¹¹¹, when analyzing the cavalry presence in Napoleonic Wars:

we can argue that there is a considerable space for animals such as horses at war in the nineteenth century, to be part of historical agents, and in which their own animal reactions and intentions could affect the sort of war that could be prosecuted and the sort of outcomes that battles might have. People counted on them and their qualities. They were part of the structuring of battlefield agency in that specific historical context¹¹².

Since they were active participants in the insurgency, found in small, medium and great combats of that civil war, and also employed as means of transportation up to their exhaustion, many of those animals were wounded and killed.

In November 1893, after crossing the border of Santa Catarina state, according to Dourado¹¹³, almost all revolutionaries, soldiers, and officers were walking on the São Joaquim mountain, because “the way was horrible” and “our horses were completely worn out”. The captain informed that his horse’s paw was bleeding and it could not be mounted anymore, so he could only use it to “go through some stream or lake”.

In October 1894, when the *maragato* colonel Demétrio José Ramos attacked Vacaria again, the local authority Avelino Paim de Souza was wounded in the right arm and his horse was killed by a bullet. Lieutenant-colonel Laurindo Paim de Souza’s horse was also killed by a gunshot¹¹⁴. Horses were thus seen as combatants and the state total herd decreased from 800 thousand in 1890 to 577 thousand after the war, which was a reduction of around 30%¹¹⁵.

Shaw¹¹⁶, when writing about equestrian agency focusing his case study on the military cavalry in the 19th century, mainly in the Waterloo Battle of

¹¹¹ SHAW, David Gary. The torturer’s horse: Agency and animals in history. *History and Theory*, v. 52, n. 4, p. 146-167, 2013.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 165.

¹¹³ DOURADO, Ângelo. *Voluntários do Martírio: narrativa da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2020. p. 71.

¹¹⁴ A FEDERAÇÃO. *Jornal A Federação*. Porto Alegre, 20-10-1894.

¹¹⁵ MEIRA, Antonio Gonçalves; CABEDA, Coralio. *Nossas Guerras: considerações históricas dos seus recursos*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2009.

¹¹⁶ SHAW, David Gary. The torturer’s horse: Agency and animals in history. *History and Theory*, v. 52, n. 4, p. 146-167, 2013. p. 162.

1815, highlighted that “the naming of horses is itself a clue to their social connection” with human beings. “Horses had names and had masters”, he wrote. At this point, we are interested in pointing out that the Federalist Revolution of 1893 records only refer to the “masters”, That is, the militaries that owned the animals.

On 21st May 1894, in the location called Encruzilhada/Machadinho, in the municipality of Lagoa Vermelha, more precisely in the Uruguay river region, the troop led by the republican captain João Garibaldino Rolim met the first forces of the Revolutionary Army, who were coming back from Paraná and heading to Rio Grande do Sul. There was a gunfight and Castilhos’ supporter reported to his commander, “lost the horse he was mounted on with two gunshots”¹¹⁷. In mid April 1895, in Campos Novos, a city in the state of Santa Catarina neighboring Lagoa Vermelha, lieutenant-colonel Henrique Rupp, from that State, attacked José Chicuta’s revolutionary camping. There, he collected hundreds of cows and horses, “including Chicuta’s horse”¹¹⁸. It seems relevant to observe that the animals had no names, only their “masters” or owners.

In the Waterloo Battle, which defined the end of Napoleon’s empire, there were two famous horses: Marengo, the stallion that was wounded over ten times throughout the fifteen years it accompanied Napoleão Bonaparte; and Copenhagen, Duke of Wellington’s war horse, which worked along with his master from 15 to 18 hours a day¹¹⁹. Regarding Gumercindo Saraiva, the main *maragato* general in 1893, there is no record of any horses receiving a particular name. Likewise, in the logbook kept by Ângelo Dourado¹²⁰, who accompanied the revolutionary march throughout the Southern states of the country, along with the general, there is no mention to a name given to Gumercindo’s horse. Dourado¹²¹ recorded that general Aparício Saraiva, in the Passo Fundo Battle on 27th June 1894, “lost a horse”, but there is no record whatsoever of the animal’s name.

It can be said that the Gaucho horses used in the civil war were anonymous. The dynamic characteristic of the conflict, based on constant

¹¹⁷ PILAR, Fabrício. *Memórias da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2021. p. 166.

¹¹⁸ REPÚBLICA. *Jornal República* (SC), 01-05-1895.

¹¹⁹ SHAW, David Gary. The torturer’s horse: Agency and animals in history. *History and Theory*, v. 52, n. 4, p. 146-167, 2013.

¹²⁰ DOURADO, Ângelo. *Voluntários do Martírio: narrativa da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2020.

¹²¹ *Ibid.* p. 250.

marches, tends to explain the fact that Gumercindo and Aparicio, on the revolutionary side; and General Lima and Senator Pinheiro Machado, on the government side, used various animals from the beginning to the end of the insurgency. It would even be unfeasible to stick to a single horse when faced with the need to travel long distances, crossing rivers, and using boats or even railways to go ahead. Horses were left behind because when they were no longer able to march, dead or injured, they were replaced by others, taken from other owners, stolen, and even purchased, throughout the marches. This prevented the establishment of a stronger connection between men and horses. However, this fact should not obliterate their influence throughout the military campaign.

In the support category, in addition to their use as a means of transportation, mainly by officers, horses were used as couriers. The messengers sent by supporters of Castilhos and federalists were called “*próprios*” (own). Their importance resides in the fact that in the region of Campos de Cima da Serra, and even in Alfredo Chaves and Antônio Prado Italian colonies, which were districts of Lagoa Vermelha and Vacaria, respectively, there was not a telegraph network or railway, the latter was concentrated, according to Meira and Cabeda¹²², in Fronteira and Porto Alegre. Messages had to be sent via *próprios* on horseback since those were the fastest animals used in the civil war.

In the morning of 17 October 1893, when the Revolutionary Army was camping in Lagoa Vermelha, a very important message arrived. Coming on horseback from Lages, which was around two hundred kilometers away, the federalist Thimoteo Feijó brought some newspapers with information about the establishment of a *maragato* government in the city of Desterro, the capital of Santa Catarina¹²³. General Luiz Alves de Oliveira Salgado, commander of one of the insurgent troops, immediately sent an urgent letter to the new governor of Santa Catarina, reporting that he was heading to Vacaria and asking “whether it was necessary or advantageous to enter with the forces under his command in the state of Santa Catarina”¹²⁴. The general’s letter was sent on horseback and reached the authorities of the neighboring state on

¹²² MEIRA, Antonio Gonçalves; CABEDA, Coralio. *Nossas Guerras: considerações históricas dos seus recursos*. Porto Alegre: Edigal, 2009.

¹²³ DOURADO, Ângelo. *Voluntários do Martírio: narrativa da Revolução de 1893*. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2020; MEIRINHO, Jali. *1893-1894: História e historiografia da Revolução em Santa Catarina*: Florianópolis: Editora Insular, 2009.

¹²⁴ JORNAL DO COMMÉRCIO. *Jornal do Comércio*. Desterro (SC), 27-10-1893.

26th October, which was nine days after having been sent, when the federalists were already in the city that is currently called Bom Jesus.

There are many more reports by commanders on both sides of the conflict to have sent messengers on horseback carrying communications and instructions. In some cases, they were stopped by enemy forces. This occurred, for example, in March 1894, when a *próprio* sent by colonel José Chicuta, who had been involved with the dispute in the stretch between Lagoa Vermelha and Santa Catarina, was captured on Rio Forquilha Mountain by the lieutenant-colonel Heleodoro de Moraes Branco and indicated the location of the revolutionary camping in Barracão. “I arrested one of Chicuta’s *próprios*, who was going to Theodoro Ricardo camping to find out about the situation”, wrote Castilho’s supporter¹²⁵.

Another quite interesting example was when major Prestes Guimarães, main federalist leader in the Northern region of Rio Grande do Sul, sent major Leonel Maria da Rocha away to contact Gumercindo Saraiva, who was in Paraná and wanted to go back to Rio Grande do Sul¹²⁶. Leonel da Rocha travelled alone from Passo Fundo, on horseback, to fulfil the mission he had received from his commander. He managed to get there and when he returned, he said that Gumercindo was marching towards Passo Fundo. Prestes Guimarães decided to meet him in Campo do Meio, in June 1894. Dourado¹²⁷ included a new entry in his logbook, from Paraná, classifying Leonel as “a brave lad who had the courage to come from Rio Grande do Sul, through the forest, going past Passo Fundo, to provide news about [general] Lima’s forces”.

The particular nature of the civil war of 1893, which was seen to be a conflict with permanent movement of military and militia troops, demanded intense use of animals. Those animals were common in that territory and the local populations had a close historical, cultural, economic, and even martial link with them. For this reason, such conflict cannot be approached without understanding the role played by cows, oxen, mules, donkeys, horses, and mares, whose herds reduced significantly as a result of the years in combat throughout many different cities, villages, district, and rural zones in Rio Grande do Sul. One distinctive characteristic of the Federalist Revolution of

¹²⁵ A FEDERAÇÃO. Jornal A Federação. Porto Alegre, 13-04-1894.

¹²⁶ PRESTES GUIMARÃES, Antônio Ferreira. A Revolução Federalista em Cima da Serra (1892-1895). Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro Editor, 1987.

¹²⁷ DOURADO, Ângelo. Voluntários do Martírio: narrativa da Revolução de 1893. Porto Alegre: Martins Livreiro, 2020. p. 198.

1893 was the practice of beheading, but we can confidently say that it was also a fight of animals in its literal meaning.

Final Considerations

Throughout this article, we sought to investigate the use of animals in the particular case of the 1893 civil war, with a special focus on the region of Lagoa Vermelha and Vacaria, both municipalities located in the state of Rio Grande do Sul in southern Brazil. The hypothesis that the use of animals was largely employed due to the specific characteristics of that conflict was confirmed. From there, and inspired by the criteria put forward by Kistler¹²⁸, we observed three basic functions for the animals during the conflict, namely, transport, food, and combat. Horses, cows, oxen, mules, and donkeys were positioned in function circles (Figure 1).

Those spaces were defined according to the reports of the war provided by insurgents and counterinsurgents, who participated in the battles. Therefore, this is not a deduction regarding the roles played by the animals, but rather what was effectively recorded by combatants.

We observed that all animals analyzed worked as a means of transport, in both the logistic aspect, carrying weapons, ammunition, and food (mule, donkey, cow, and ox) and as mounting animals for the officers or to send messages (horses). We highlighted the differences between mules, which were able to carry hundreds of kilos, and horses, whose main characteristic was speed.

Some animals performed at least two functions. This includes the cattle, which was used as the basic source of food to nourish the troops – this was, in fact, their main function. As for horses, they were typically used in battle and therefore hit by bullets, for this reason, their death was recorded.

Regarding all the other animals used, no concern was shown with their reproduction, wellbeing, or the stability of their population. In fact, they were extracted from fields and private properties indiscriminately. As a consequence, sharp reduction in the cattle and horse herds was observed, which harmed the livestock production and economy in Rio Grande do Sul. Such scenery was repeated three decades later in the Revolution of 1923, when the use of animals was also intense in the fight against the government

¹²⁸ KISTLER, John M. *Animals in the Military: From Hannibal's Elephants to the Dolphins of the US Navy*. ABC-CLIO, 2011.

of Borges de Medeiros, who succeeded Júlio de Castilhos in the command of the state of Rio Grande do Sul.

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