

Abstract:

This thesis focuses on the historical figure of Leopoldina of Austria, daughter of the Austrian Emperor Francis I. Married in 1817 with the Portuguese Prince Pedro, the future emperor of Brazil.

Chapter one. Introduces the reader in the context of the Portugal of the beginning of the nineteenth century including the departure of the royal court to Brazil and events occurred during the period 1808 – 1822 in Brazil that led to the declaration of independence.

Chapter two. Devoted to the Archduchess Leopoldina and her biography, with an important remark to the links established between Central Europe and Brazil, thanks to the marriage of Leopoldina and Pedro.

Chapter three. Refers to Leopoldina's contribution to the independence of Brazil, which is neglected by some historians. The chapter describes the two main currents developed by historians: That one that attributes the independence achievement mainly to Pedro I, neglecting the influence of the Empress Consort on the process, revised through a selection of handbooks of Brazilian history; and the one, supported in the writings of Karl H. Oberacker Jr., assigning to Leopoldina a fundamental role during the declaration of independence of Brazil.

Key words: Leopoldina of Austria, declaration of independence, Pedro I