Revolting Visions: Contesting Aesthetics in Brazil's Era of Slave Rebellion

By

Matthew Francis Rarey

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The dissertation is approved by the following members of the Final Oral Committee:

Jill H. Casid, Professor, Art History
Severino J. Albuquerque, Professor, Spanish and Portuguese
Preeti Chopra, Associate Professor, Art History
Henry J. Drewal, Evjue-Bascom Professor, Art History and Afro-American Studies
James H. Sweet, Vilas Jartz Distinguished Professor, History

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Acknowledgements

I remember my first graduate seminar, when Henry Drewal asked us all for our responses to W.J.T. Mitchell's "What Do Pictures Want?"[1] Speaking first, I noted my disagreement with Mitchell's premise, arguing that images are subject solely to cultural and human interpretation, that they have no agency of their own. As Henry patiently listened to my answer, he smiled and nodded. When I finished speaking, he politely pushed me on my dismissal of Mitchell's point: perhaps, he suggested, images can be thought of as active agents with the power and desire to change the world around them. Today I find it fitting, if not ironic, that the question that forms the backbone of this project is the same one that began my career in graduate school. For the past eight years, I have been privileged to be part of a community that pushed me in directions I did not yet know I wanted to travel, and without which my work would never have found a home.

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[1] W.J.T. Mitchell, "What Do Pictures Want?" in *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 28-56.

chance on letting a precocious M.A. student into his history seminar, and our conversations continue to ground and guide my work through the waters of the African Atlantic. Severino Albuquerque deserves all the credit in the world for going through the painful process of teaching me Portuguese, but in so doing he opened my eyes to a nation I knew nothing about. Five years later I cannot imagine working anywhere else. Finally, Preeti Chopra has had a larger influence in this project than even she may realize, and I thank her for pushing me on the performance and practice of urbanism. Thanks as well to all of my fellow graduate students who provided such a thriving and collegial intellectual environment, and to Tom Dale for his tireless work to secure funding and opportunities for us.

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Laroiê, Exú.

List of Abbreviations Used in the Text

AHM	Arquivo Histórico Municipal, Salvador.
AHU	Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon.
AN	Arquivo Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.
ANTT	Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon.
AOTC	Arquivo da Ordem Terceiro do Carmo, Salvador.
APEB	Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, Salvador.
FPV	Fundação Pierre Verger, Salvador.
TASTD	Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database.

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Introduction

Slavery, Revolt, and the Agency of the Visual

"Dissidence is . . . an imagination that seeks to inaugurate an impossible time. It opens the gates to the possible and . . . to the insurrection of the possible."[1]

-Rossana Reguillo

"[In] Brazil . . . every thing is done by the eye."[2]

-Henry Koster

Three decades before a series of thirty slave rebellions in as many years would shake the social fabric of the northeastern Brazilian captaincy (later province) of Bahia, Carlos Julião, an Italian-born colonel and artist in the Portuguese army, created a collage that subtly articulates the relationship between visual culture and African slave revolt in Brazil.[3] Produced in May 1779, *Elevation and façade showing in naval prospect the city of Salvador* presents a view Bahia's capital as its ruling classes wished it to be (Figure 0.1). At bottom, a row of urban types defined by racial category, social status, and cultural origin conveys the stability of social rank and structure; at center, nine plans of Salvador's forts and garrisons collectively render the ideal of a protected and secure city; and at top, Portuguese imperial flags fly over merchant ships crossing a panoramic vista of a bustling, productive harbor. In piecing together *Salvador*, Julião drew every fortress, ship, person, and label elsewhere, carefully cut them out, and then pasted them together on the background: a once blank slate now populated with the bricolage of empire. While these images work in concert to manifest the idealized qualities of a colonial port city, Julião's choice to bind them together in a collage highlights that dream's artificial construction.

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[1] Rossana Reguillo, "Dissidence: Facing the disorder of the open-ended—Mexico, a brief and precarious map of the impossible." *e-Misférica* 10:2 (Summer 2013): http://hemisphericinstitute.org/hemi/en/e-misferica-102/reguillo

[2] Henry Koster, *Travels in Brazil* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1816), 342.

[3] Under Portuguese rule, Bahia was a captaincy until 1822, and then a province in the Brazilian Empire from 1822-1889.

This act of assemblage calls attention to the movements and flows of cultures and identities that always link the here to the elsewhere, to that which is literally off *Salvador*'s map. The crossing of ships and bodies back and forth between Africa, the Americas, and Europe – whether entering the bay with enslaved Africans to work sugar plantations, or leaving the harbor with the refined cane sugar their labor created – was essential to Salvador's economic and political viability as a node in the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic web.[4]

If assembling *Salvador* from the fragmented histories and memories that circulate through the black Atlantic constitutes the imagined colonial city, these processes of extraction, dislocation, and re-assemblage also invoke its potential unsettling and deconstruction. Transplanting histories of enslavement and Afro-Atlantic cultural flows, as well as the ways such histories are formed through the politics of transplantation, are as much a part of *Salvador* as military fortifications and symbolic trappings of Portuguese imperial authority. At bottom right, a West African-born fruit seller carries a *bolsa de mandinga*, a ritual pouch used by enslaved Africans to fight against the systemic violence of enslavement in colonial Brazil; and to her right, another woman with a bolsa de mandinga dances *lundú*, a dance etymologically derived from *calundu*, a set of Central African rituals of spirit possession and collective assembly that were widely practiced, tolerated, and often feared, by Brazil's colonial ruling classes.[5] While these visible renderings of counter-colonial aesthetics work inside *Salvador*, its piecemeal assemblage, while rendering visible the artifice of the colonial project, also asks us to think about what

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[4] The term "Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic," which I use here in concert and contrast to Paul Gilroy's "black Atlantic" is from A.J.R. Russell-Wood, "The Portuguese Atlantic, 1415-1808" in *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal*, ed. Jack P. Green and Philip D. Morgan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 81-110. On the "black Atlantic," see Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

[5] On *bolsas de mandinga*, see Chapter 3. On the history of lundú, its link to central African calundu, and the evolution of lundú as a dance among whites and pardos, see Marc A. Hertzman, *Making Samba: A New History of Race and Music in Brazil* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 20-23. Hertzman notes that the earliest known written reference to lundú as a dance is from 1780 (21). However, assuming Julião dated his image truthfully (1779), then his written description of a woman "*dançando lundu*," is the earliest known reference by one year.

remains unseen underneath those pasted fragments, what provocations and possibilities exist along the ridges where the body, the fortress, and the flag were glued into *Salvador*.

Methodology and Chapter Outline

Revolting Visions takes up these points of colonial and slavocratic ambivalence as sites of political action. If the ridges that mark *Salvador* as an assemblage also mark the artifice of the colonial project, and by extension the symbolic structures used to consolidate and naturalize it, then the colonial dream of *Salvador* always rests on a series of unnerving counter-aesthetic practices that threaten to unmake the city from the inside. Now two decades since the publication of Homi Bhabha's *The Location of Culture*, postcolonial studies remain emboldened by thinking about the seeming margins and interstices of cultural production as the most fertile sites of dissidence and the unnerving of colonial authority.[6] Read through Bhabha's argument, the very construction of *Salvador*, as a colonial project, depended – as Julião seems to insist – on the forwarding and dissemination of its imagined and idealized self. At the same time, the production of these imagined visions of empire necessarily crossed with the incorporation of foreign and strange plants, practices, peoples, and perspectives. The idealized visions of empire, then, worked to remake and unnerve these colonial visions from the inside. As such, *Salvador*'s weakest points are also the points most necessary to its construction. The careful binding of disparate histories and cultural practices in order to construct a colonial society through memories of diaspora and enslavement, however, meant that such visions could revolt against the representational system in which they were embedded.

In what follows, then, *Revolting Visions* foregrounds obscured, discarded, and often invisible aesthetic practices as challenges to the structures of enslavement in late colonial and

[6] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

early imperial Brazil. In so doing, it seeks to examine a premise rarely discussed in the historiography of slave rebellions: the multifaceted, and often contradictory, roles that visual media and visual politics perform in the motivation, waging, and suppression of slave insurrections and maroon communities in Brazil and the wider black Atlantic. Through three case studies, I will trace how seemingly benign aesthetic practices such as military cartography, subsistence gardening, religious sculpture, illustrations of daily life in travel narratives, and protective talismans shaped the diverse and contested collective ideals of racial and political autonomy, African cultural resistance, and hegemony that motivated slave revolts in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Brazil. As we will see, the revolts discussed below utilized strategic interventions in representational and symbolic practice to undertake radical political change. In turn, these interventions required quick, and often capitulatory, responses on the part of Bahia's government and larger society. If the collage that is the colonial vision of *Salvador* was glued together from other locations, other histories, and other political possibilities, in so doing, revolts revealed the instability and potential destruction of the very authority structures *Salvador* makes visible.

In making this argument, readers will note my methodological and theoretical insistence on the intimate commingling of politics and aesthetics. In the previous paragraphs, my rendering of the title of Julião's *Salvador* follows the standard art historical practice of italicizing the title of an artwork. Yet I also intend this title to stand in for a "real" historical time and place. Indeed, while I privilege engagement with *Salvador* as an Afro-Atlantic assemblage of aesthetic and political practice, Julião seems preoccupied with an emphasis on an exact recording of geographic location and chronological time, in seeming contrast to the multiple times and locations that inhabit the collage of *Salvador*. At the collage's central bottom panel, Julião notes

that he produced *Salvador* at "13 degrees latitude, and 345 degrees, 35 minutes longitude . . . aboard the ship *Nossa Senhora Madre de Deus* in May 1779." This exactness of time and place, then, is made possible through the crossings of merchant ships, enslaved bodies, and symbols of political authority – in other words, the colonial city – that here I foreground as a site for violent political contestations over Brazil's slavery society. As such, what would seem to be a real, or grounding, gesture of location, reveals itself as a carefully-orchestrated set of political relationships, themselves always structured through layers of representation. In sum: the city, in its seeming reality, is a representation itself.

In one sense, *Revolting Visions* similarly grounds analyses in sites and times of historical specificity, around two events I argue are both representative and revealing of the efficacy of the unified aesthetic and political in contesting enslavement in Brazil. The first of these was the invasion and razing of the maroon community (*quilombo*) of Buraco do Tatú northeast of Salvador on September 2, 1763. I take up this event in chapter one, "The Plantation, *Aquilombado*," which investigates how the spatial layout of quilombos emerged as a central aesthetic battleground in Bahia. In the second half of the eighteenth century, quilombos sustained themselves by preying on Bahia's plantations and urban centers, while also working to forge their own independent agricultural systems. Buraco do Tatú was in many ways a prototypical quilombo, just one of scores of similar communities in Bahia populated by disenchanted Africans and Brazilian-born blacks who sought either temporary or permanent refuge from plantation and urban enslavement. Yet what makes Buraco do Tatú exceptional is the relationship between its material and representational manifestations: though the former met its end through razing at the hands of a Portuguese militia, the latter persists through an aerial-view map of Buracu do Tatú, produced to accompany the 1764 letter detailing its destruction by the

Portuguese military. In light of a historiography of quilombos seeking to identify their African origins, I argue that this map challenges its viewers to work through some of the key colonial ambivalences rendered visible by the existence of quilombos and their alternately antagonistic and reciprocal relationship to the plantation and slavery economy. Principally, I trace how ideals Brazilian plantation land use was tied to ideals of social stability, and then nefariously re-invented by fugitive slaves and incorporated inside quilombos. The artist of the Buracu do Tatú plan – a man also charged with the quilombo's destruction – represents the quilombo as a rebellious re-purposing of Portuguese colonialism: the nefarious embodiment of a plantation colonized by its seeming opposite.

The final two chapters work through the background of the Malê Rebellion, a carefully-planned insurrection led by enslaved African Muslims in Salvador on the night of January 24-25, 1835. The largest slave revolt in the history of the mainland Americas, the Malê Rebellion was the culmination of a series of nearly thirty rebellions, led primarily by enslaved African Muslims (Yorùbás / Nagôs and Hausas) in Salvador and the Bahian Recôncavo between 1807 and 1835. Amidst palpable fears of a slave rebellion domino effect after the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804), the effects of the Bahia revolts had a wide reach, sending political shockwaves throughout the Brazilian slave economy and providing fodder for abolitionist debates around the world. Yet, while the Haitian Revolution remains the only slave insurrection deemed politically "successful" by historians, I implicitly interrogate how such definitions of political success work to obscure other responses to seemingly central symbolic regimes of Brazilian imperial authority.

Chapter two, "Dangerous Looking," argues the Malê Rebellion worked to counter the public display of the violated enslaved black body as a performance of imperial authority. At the time of the 1835 revolt – indeed, for three centuries prior – the public spectacle of whipping

enslaved black bodies on Salvador's *pelourinho* (public whipping post) was a foundational performance of secular governmental authority. However, in the aftermath of the revolt, these whippings, as well as the pelourinho itself, suddenly came to be understood as animators of the Bahia rebellions. Specifically, city officials now feared that the spectacle of the public flogging of the revolt's leaders would lead to further rebellions. Fearing that the mere existence of the pelourinho could cause the city's enslaved population to turn against this violent system of representation, in September of 1835, Salvador's city council voted to dismantle the pelourinho altogether. As such, I argue that the whipping spectacle engendered what I term "counter-witnessing": an act of rebellious spectatorship that disavowed the passive acceptance of slave whippings, and turned ritualized violence against itself. As I trace the established "codes of looking" at whipping spectacles through a range of eighteenth century Portuguese images of public whipping posts and nineteenth century illustrated travel narratives, I outline how these images work as delicate negotiations of the politics of audience, representation, and public spectacles of violence prior to and during the Bahia revolts. Yet, in each case, the enslaved black body seems to disappear from the realm of personhood and politics at the moment it is most visible. Pushing against this, I locate one of the most productive moments of counter-witnessing through a sculpture of the flogged Christ produced by Francisco das Chagas, a free black artist in Salvador. This sculpture, by taking the whipping spectacle out of direct representation, calls its viewers to political action while also asking current scholars to continue to take up the politics of witnessing of images of violence in Atlantic slavery.

Whereas the previous chapter works at the center of public ritual and hypervisibility, Chapter three, "Insignificant Things," delves into obfuscation and occlusion as revolutionary political-aesthetic strategies. Many participants in the Malê Rebellion utilized small pouches

filled with protective substances, called *patuás*, both to ensure their personal safety as well as the success of the revolt. Known as *bolsas de mandinga* in the centuries prior, these pouches were in wide use throughout the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic leading up to the revolt. Yet in the aftermath of the rebellion, these pouches and their contents became the central focus of a citywide police repression, under the presumption that any Africans using them must have been associated with the revolt. I investigate how such a common practice became invested in so much revolutionary power, as well as so feared by the city's police forces. I argue that these pouches worked to counter what I term the "aesthetic conditions of slavery" outlined in the previous chapter by utilizing internal contents whose meaning was intentionally obscured. Seemingly insignificant and detritus substances imbued these objects with the power to counter the hyper-visibility and systemic violence that were byproducts of slavery in Brazil; powers that were tacitly acknowledged due to patuás' systemic repression following the rebellion.

While I premise the singular revolt dates of September 2, 1763 and January 24, 1835 and the location of Bahia as the orienting gestures of my argument (as Julião orients his viewers through his recording of time and place), these chapters also proceed from a premise that such specific times and locations, like all aesthetic-political projects, are already a set of aesthetic choices meant to orient viewers and inhabitants toward a certain set of political goals. As such, the interpretive and relational frameworks I use to undertake my analyses of the objects, images, and aesthetic strategies detailed above may seem often ahistorical or anachronistic. Yet it is through these jarring juxtapositions that one pushes against the artificial logic of colonial visuality; that is, the ways in which the exploitative practices of enslavement and empire were made to seem as natural and given. Thus, I intend my narrative's moves back and forth across disparate times, locations, memories, and histories to delve deep into connective seams and tears

that make up *Salvador*; to alternate political possibilities covered up, occluded, and off the seemingly ordered grid of contextual histories.

Literature Review

The three case studies outlined above collectively emerge as a response to a provocation by Marcus Wood, who in 2002 noted that "looking, as opposed to reading, has not, in the context of slavery, been described as an exceptionally problematic activity."[7] Indeed, my goal is to show how looking and the politics of vision remain not only deeply problematic and political activities for current scholars, but were major concerns through the Bahia revolts. In making this observation, Wood articulated a previously ignored problem in the historiography of slavery: mainly, the use of images as documentary sources, as opposed to complex and active agents in their own right. The following decade's scholarship sought to define the visual culture of slavery as not only limited to images that somehow "depict" slavery, but also as the practices of landscape, body classification, and assemblage aesthetics (three realms dealt with extensively in this project) that produce and enact the racial ideologies at the center of transatlantic slavery discourse.[8] *Revolting Visions* seeks to expand on this scholarship by showing in many cases, counter-intuitively, how what has long been termed "African resistance" was, in part, produced and disseminated through images either sanctioned or made by Europeans.

So far, this perspective has not impacted the study of armed slave revolt. In *Blind Memory*, Wood noted the need for a study of the visual culture of revolt, yet none has been

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[7] Marcus Wood, *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America, 1780-1865* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 6.

[8] See, for example, Jill H. Casid, "Countercolonial Landscapes" in *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 191-236; Kay Dian Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar, and the Culture of Refinement: Picturing the British West Indies, 1700-1840* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

written.[9] This project will be the first, re-conceptualizing slave revolts not only as violent demonstrations borne out of oppression, but as aesthetic practices emerging from the need to negotiate a symbolic world of race, class, and identity produced through transatlantic visual culture. The Bahia revolts are a productive case study in this regard. As the works of João José Reis and Flávio dos Santos Gomes continue to be the most thorough studies of the revolts' political, economic, and cultural motivations, my project poses a shift by rethinking the history of the revolts through the images that shaped them.[10] Such a project is timely given the state of the study of the visual culture of Brazilian slavery. Despite a wealth of literature on Afro-Brazilian slavery and culture, the visual culture of slavery in Brazil has received comparatively less attention in comparison to North Atlantic materials.[11] This project, then, based on Wood's provocation, posits a double move: to rethink the traditional history of slave rebellions along aesthetic lines of inquiry; while also posing that revolt may not necessarily be confined to violent acts of usurpation, but instead as a constant thread of resistance woven through the history of the visual culture of slavery and its performative inheritances.

Yet this word "resistance" troubles me. While Raymond and Alice Bauer's inaugural study of slave resistance distinctly emphasized quotidian forms of dissent and rupture among enslaved Africans in the U.S. South, for most of the twentieth century, scholarship in both Brazil and the United States conceived of "resistance" to slavery as defined solely through violent

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[9] Wood, *Blind Memory*, 9.

[10] João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Flávio dos Santos Gomes, *A hidra e os pântanos: mocambos, quilombos e comunidades de fugitivos no Brasil (séculos XVII-XIX)* (São Paulo: UNESP, 2005); João José Reis and Flávio dos Santos Gomes (orgs.), *Liberdade por um fio: história dos quilombos no Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996).

[11] For what remain the most extensive catalogues of the visual culture of slavery in Brazil, see Nelson Aquilar, *Negro de corpo e alma* (São Paulo: Fundação Bienal de São Paulo: Associação Brasil 500 Anos Artes Visuais, 2000); and Carlos Eugenio Marcondes de Moura, *A Travessia da Calunga Grande: Três Seculos de Imagens sobre o Negro no Brasil (1637-1899)* (São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 2000). Marcus Wood, similarly noting this gap, compares Brazilian and American approaches to representing slavery in *Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

insurrection or slave flight.[12] For example, in his classic work on slave resistance in Brazil, *O Quilombo dos Palmares*, Edison Carneiro outlines three basic forms of resistance to slavery in Portuguese America: "organized revolt," aimed at taking power, manifested principally in the 1807-1835 revolts in Bahia; "armed insurrection;" and quilombos.[13] This perception continued through the 1980s, until the genesis of subaltern studies began to focus on quotidian acts of resistance that worked to undermine conditions of enslavement, even absent of obvious political motivations. As such, slavery studies in general have been marked by a seeming division between, on one hand, politically visible insurrections, and quotidian resistance on the other; while at the same time, "resistance" continues to be used as an overall umbrella term to unite both armed insurrection and everyday occurrences. As a result, "resistance" in the current context of slavery studies describes a wide range of actions and behaviors at institutional, communal, and individual levels, ranging in intensity from "revolutions to hairstyles," with "hairstyles" working to stand in for quotidian acts of resistance, even absent of clear structures of power or authority to contest.[14] As Alan Knight argues, in present usage, the concept of resistance has become "so pervasive and ethereal that it defies explanation."[15]

Implicit in this seeming division between revolt and quotidian resistance, however, are assumptions that tie each label to its ubiquity or uniqueness, while also asserting the aesthetic as opposed to the political. It seems resistance is everywhere, and revolts are rare. While

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[12] Raymond A. Bauer and Alice H Bauer, "Day-to-Day Resistance to Slavery." *Journal of Negro History* 27 (1942): 388-419. The shift to a focus on resistance as revolt was begun by Herbert Aptheker; see Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943).

[13] Edison Carneiro, *O quilombo dos Palmares, 1630-1695* (São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense Limitada, 1947), 13. This argument is reproduced in both R.K. Kent, "Palmares: An African State in Brazil." *The Journal of African History* 6:2 (1965): 162; and Clóvis Moura, *Quilombos: Resistência ao escravismo* (São Paulo: Editora Ática, 1987), 14.

[14] Jocelyn A. Hollander and Rachel L. Einwohner, "Conceptualizing Resistance." *Sociological Forum* 19:4 (2004): 533-554. Alan Knight also endorses this continuum, quoting it directly; see Knight, "Rethinking Histories of Resistance in Brazil and Mexico" in *New Approaches to Resistance in Brazil and Mexico*, ed. John Gledhill and Patience A. Schell (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 325.

[15] Knight, "Rethinking Histories of Resistance in Brazil and Mexico" in *New Approaches to Resistance*, 341.

"hairstyles," as aesthetic, quotidian, and performative acts generally are placed under the larger rubric of "resistance," the label "revolt" remains reserved for singular, violent episodes to which are assigned specific names, dates, and locations: the 1812 Aponte Rebellion in Cuba; the Haitian Revolution of 1791-1804; or the 1835 Malê Rebellion in Bahia. This distinction, in my view, speaks to a reluctance to engage aesthetics and performativity as agents at the most revolutionary ends of the political spectrum; in other words, to think about not only what an aesthetic rebellion would look like, but how visual ideologies, and their associated acts of "resistance," are implicated as causes, agents, and weapons in the most celebrated slave revolts of the black Atlantic.

At the same time, while I agree that resistance "must involve consciousness, intentionality, and deliberate effort by the social actors involved," I ask that we imagine such agency not only working through people, but also through images and objects.[16] As radical as such an idea may seem, it forms an emerging and productive thread in anthropology and media and cultural studies. In his *Art and Agency*, for example, Alfred Gell focuses on the deep interactions between artworks and humans to argue that such relationships make artworks *similar* to humans, thus understanding works as brought into the world in order to change it as social agents.[17] This should not mean, as W.J.T. Mitchell cautions, that we simply anthropomorphize images. To do so would assume we grant human agency to images where none existed previously. The agency of images, then, is distinct from the agency of humans. For Mitchell, images are agents in the sense of "agency" as an arm of the state, or as secret agents tied to a political goal. As such, images, when endlessly reproduced and copied – as is always the case in

[16] Luis Nicolau Parés, "Where Does Resistance Hide in Contemporary Candomblé?" in *New Approaches to Resistance*, 159.
[17] Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

the visual (re-)production of empire – possess the ability to "go rogue" and revolt against the intentions of their creators.[18]

My insistence on the political agency of images, especially related to the spectacles of political dissidence and punishment, has gained renewed interest in the past decade, especially in reference to 9/11, the Iraq War, and the Arab Spring.[19] However, Serge Gruzinski seeks to take this contemporary emphasis on the agency of images and locate its genesis not in the modern rise of the spectacle-war, but as a foundational point of the rise of transatlantic empires. Gruzinski locates the "war of images" in the colonial period, back to Latin America, and back to the crossings of culture and syncretism that boiled at the confluence of global capitalism and the trade in enslaved bodies. In such a multicultural society, Gruzinski argues, "[T]he image can be a vehicle for all sorts of power and resistance," and the "multiple forms of resistance that the image causes or anticipates, and the roles it takes on in a multicultural society."[20] Gruzinski gives up "beginning an overly systematic description of the image and its context, for fear of losing sight of a reality that exists only through their interaction."[21] This "reality" of which Gruzinski speaks, I argue, lives through the interactions of disparate histories obscured in the colonial context and made to seem as natural.

If the reality of images exists solely through their interaction in Latin America's colonial histories, this conception of an imaged reality seems to fall away in current thinking in the "war of images" through the contemporary moment. In *Cloning Terror*, his analysis of how the current "War on Terror" both gave rise to, and was created by, the proliferation of visual imagery, W.J.T

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[18] W.J.T. Mitchell, "Image Wars." *Nomadikon* 15 (2012), accessed July 23, 2013: http://www.nomadikon.net/ContentItem.aspx?ci=320

[19] See, for example: Nicholas Mirzoeff, *Watching Babylon: The War in Iraq and Global Visual Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2005); and W.J.T Mitchell, *Cloning Terror: The War of Images, 9/11 to the Present* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).

[20] Serge Gruzinski, *Images at War: Mexico from Columbus to* Blade Runner *(1492-2019)*, trans. Heather MacLean (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 3, 4.

[21] Gruzinski, *Images at War*, 4.

Mitchell argues that we are living in a "war of images" which is, as he notes: "[N]ot *literally* a war. Images do not go into battle and kill each other; human beings do." [22] Even so, even as a war of images, in his formulation, is not a "real" conflict of violence and death, every war is a war of images: "The boundary between real and imaginary, literal and figurative war, in fact, is just as important a consideration in the understanding of war as the borders between nation-states."[23]

One could push against this division between the real and the imaginary, as I do here, through William Hogarth's engraving *The Battle of the Pictures* (Figure 0.2). Originally produced as a bidder's ticket to an auction of four of his paintings, Hogarth apparently intended the work to be a searing commentary on the questionable ethics of auction houses in eighteenth-century Britain. At right, his "The Tête à Tête" (from the 1743 *Marriage à la Mode* series) rests on an easel as a seemingly endless series of older masterworks fly to attack it. These images fly out from a long line of copies, calling attention to the hyper-reproduction of a system of representation whose political authority is undermined by the mere existence of Hogarth's work. In sum, Hogarth's works overturn the Old Masters' political and economic hegemony in the auction house. As such, Hogarth's commentary asks how an entrenched system of visual representation could be so vehemently opposed by a single image, and how potentially violent the reaction could be. In so doing, Hogarth imbues images with agency, and locates them at the crossings of aesthetic taste and political fight. An innocuous aesthetic concern of taste – an auction house – becomes a "battle," a site of political contestation with an infinite army of "copies" ready to fight for visual authority. In this way, *The Battle of the Pictures* asserts – as do I – that vision and visuality, and aesthetics in general, are not differentiable from the political

[22] Mitchell, "Image Wars."
[23] Ibid.

field. Implicit here, then, is an insistence that "culture is political and does active political work," and that "images act on us," challenges which ask not only how Hogarth's *Tête à Tête* does active political work, but how *The Battle of the Pictures* itself could turn against the desires of its own makers.[24] Revolt, then, is dependent on the mobilization and production not just of images, but of aesthetic-political practices that challenge the hegemony of images put in service of the colonial project. The agency that I speak of for images here, and their ability to revolt against established structures of power, necessitates thinking of them, as Mitchell suggests, "as *double agents*, capable of switching sides, capable of being 'flipped' by acts of clever *detournement*, appropriation, and seizure for purposes quite antithetical to the intentions of their creators."[25]

Revolting Visions

Revolting Visions, then, working across both the agency of visual culture and the necessity of engaging aesthetic practice as politically relevant in slavery studies, takes up "revolt" as both a historical event and a conceptual paradigm. While the etymology of words like "rebellion" and "resistance" imply a steadfast, stable opposition, "revolt" (of Latin origin, meaning to roll back or to overturn), carries the dynamism of a performative gesture in its etymology. As such, I define revolt as an aesthetic-political act; a performance that pulled at society's attaching seams until they became tears that not only exposed the artifice of colonialism and the ambivalences of the slavery regime, but also forced the creation of new modes of aesthetic practice in order to sew society back together. In this sense, looking is an imperial ideology, and revolts are acts that unmake, or expose, the ways in which the colonial subject is trained to look. My goal, then, is twofold: first, to identify the visualist ideologies of

[24] "Celebrating the Life of Jose Muñoz: a discussion with Ellen Samuels, Ramzi Fawaz, and Jill Casid, hosted by Karma Chavez." *A Public Affair*. WPR Wisconsin Public Radio. Madison, WI: WORT, December 11, 2013.
[25] Mitchell, "Image Wars."

the colonial slavery regime as produced through the visual culture of slavery; and second, to articulate how this symbolic regime was altered, undermined, or exposed – in other words, revolted against – by the very symbolic regimes that constituted it. What emerges is a collection of objects, documents, and images (the "visual culture of slavery") characterized by often displaced, and misplaced, efforts at negotiating with this rebellious counter-visuality.

With this perspective as a starting point, I forward the concept "revolting visions" as a term to describe the entangled political and aesthetic fronts through which Bahia's slave rebellions were waged. On one hand, if colonial visuality worked to render the slavery system as natural, and hence aesthetic, the acknowledgement of its construction, then, would be "revolting" (as in aesthetically distasteful) to those invested in continuing its power. The revolting nature of these other forms of world-making, as we will see, not only engendered often violent reactions from colonial authorities, but necessitated direct responses to the challenges they posed.

But to describe a "revolting vision" also means that images and aesthetic practices possess palpable political agency, and thus have the power to "revolt," especially against the political projects of those who originally produced them. As we will see, a range of aesthetic and visual practices had the power to wage political-aesthetic war against other images and forms of world-making. In turn, following Mitchell, the most championed structures of colonial visuality could frequently turn against the political interests they were intended to serve. In turn, we will see how plantations, slave whippings, and small pouches all seemed to revolt against their creators, to different ends and with different results.

Yet this process works both ways. We will see, as well, how often images and objects re-aligned themselves with the enslaved would again change sides, further complicating the relationships between slavery, resistance, revolt, and aesthetic practice. In chapter one, the

quilombo's exposure of colonial ambivalences over agricultural practices resulted in the killing and/or re-enslavement of many of its members. In chapter two, even though the pelourinho was removed from public view, the whippings of the leaders of the Malê Rebellion continued, only in private. And in chapter three, the protective functions of bolsas de mandinga and patuás turned on their users, resulting in a violent crackdown on African aesthetics and the arrest of far more people than actually participated in the rebellion. As such, "revolting visions" construct often unequal and highly contested visual dialogues, yet, I feel, provide a productive theoretical framework to discuss the aesthetic and symbolic interchange of revolt and resistance in the black Atlantic.

Figures to Introduction

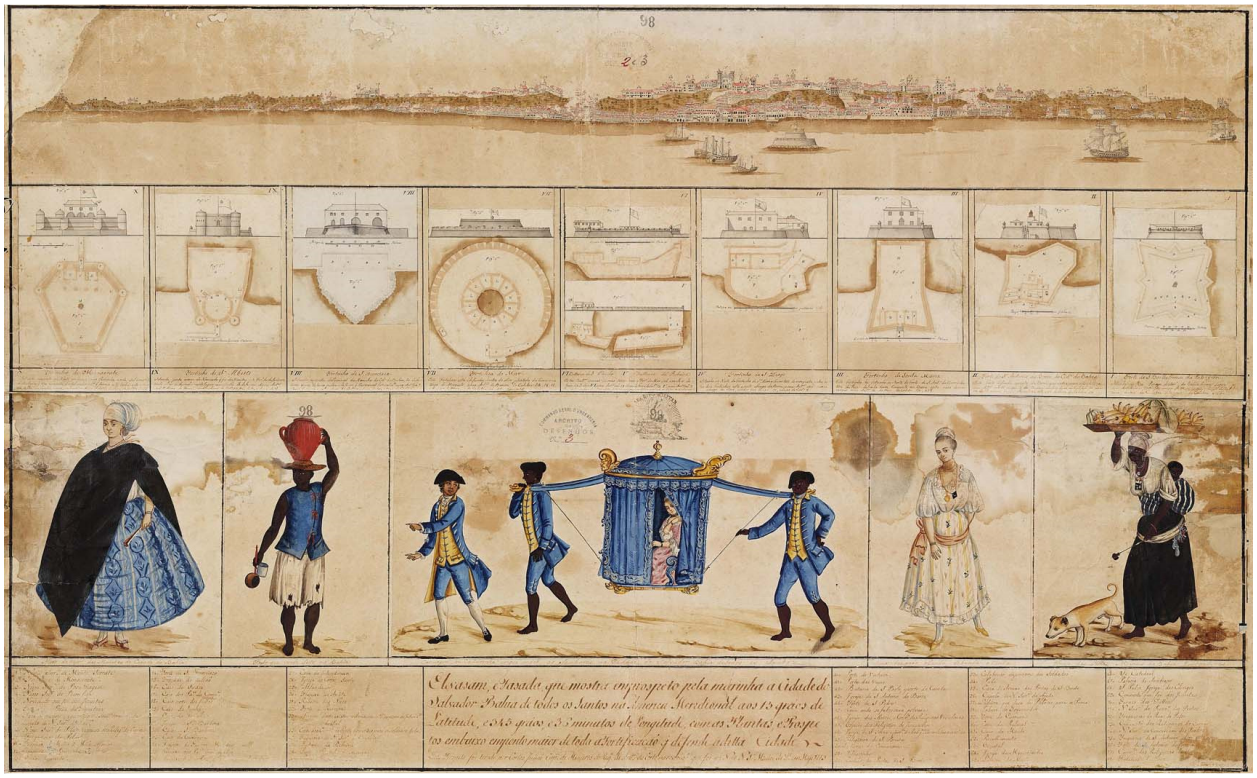

Figure 0.1
Carlos Julião, *Elevasam, Fasade, que mostra em prospeto pela marinha a Cidade de Salvador da Bahia de Todos os Santos na América Meridional aos 13 graos de latitude, e 345 graos, e 35 minutos de longitude com as plantas e prospetos embaixo em ponto de maior de todo a fortificação que defende a ditta cidade. Este prospeto foi tirado por Carlos Julião Cap M. de Mineiros de Reg.to de Artt.a da corte, no ocasião que foi na Nao Nossa Senhora Madre De Deus em Maio de 1779*, 1779. Painted collage. Gabinete de Estudos Arqueológicos e da Engenharia Militar, Lisbon.

Figure 0.2
William Hogarth, *The Battle of the Pictures*, 1743. Copper engraving. Reprinted in London, by Baldwin Craddock & Joy, 1822.

Chapter One

The Plantation, *Aquilombado*

By 1955, poet Louis Aragon was leading the French Communist Party's charge for a return to "traditional prosody" and "simpler forms and messages" in francophone poetry.[1] Aragon's intent was to counter the influence and increasing popularity of the surrealist movement in France, as well as to reclaim traditionalist identity narratives from their role in Vichy propaganda during World War II.[2] But for Aimé Césaire, aspirations of aesthetic clarity and facile legibility hid the neo-colonial politics of Aragon's "traditional" aesthetic project. Césaire's *négritude* movement vehemently opposed such ambitions through the goals of "cultural decolonization" and the articulation of a transnational black consciousness.[3] Objecting both to the metropole-periphery model of cultural diffusion (that Aragon's Frenchness implicitly granted him authority over aesthetic practice in former French colonies), as well as the idea that "simpler" prosody would free language from its difficult histories (that clarity and legibility are not also delimiting and controlling gestures), Césaire responded with a poem of his own: "La verbe *marroner*" ("The verb *marroner*").[4] Yet in the poem, Césaire does not direct his response at Aragon. Instead, the dedication of "La verbe *marroner*" is "à René Depestre, poète haïtien"

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[1] James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 180.

[2] Jennifer Stafford Brown, "'Au Feu De Ce Qui Fut Brule Ce Qui Sera': Louis Aragon and the Subversive Medieval." *The Romanic Review* 101:3 (May 2010): 325-326; Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, 180.

[3] Catherine A. John, *Clear Word and Third Sight: Folk Groundings and Diasporic Consciousness in African Caribbean Writing* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 22. For Césaire's foundational *negritude* writings see Aimé Césaire, *The Original 1939 Notebook of a Return to the Native Land*, trans. A. James Arnold and Clayton Eshleman (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan Poetry Series, 2013); and Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001).

[4] Césaire's first version of the poem was published as "Réponse à Depestre poète haïtien (éléments d'un art poétique)." *Présence africaine* 1-2 (April-July 1955): 114. The second revised edition, as well as the original, can be found in Aimé Césaire, *La poésie*, ed. Daniel Maximin and Gilles Carpentier (Paris: Editions du Sueil, 1994), 481-483 and 545-546. The English translation of the second edition, which I alter slightly here, can be found in Aimé Césaire, *The Collected Poetry*, trans. Clayton Eshleman and Annette Smith (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 368-369.

("to René Depestre, Haitian poet"). In 1955, in the journal *Présence Africaine*, Depestre had come out in public support of Aragon's call, arguing, as Belinda Elizabeth Jack has summarized, that the distinguishing "racial and cultural elements" of Haitian poetry "be to some degree subordinate to a French linguistic framework."[5]

"La verbe *marroner*" begins along the banks of the Seine. While this river has emerged as a symbol of the French metropole, Césaire reminds us that it also drains into the Atlantic, an ocean marked by the histories of the slave trade that fed colonial desires on plantation islands like Martinique and Haiti, islands that were the birthplaces of Césaire and Depestre, respectively. "It is a Seine night / and as if in drunkenness I recall / the demented chant of Boukman delivering your country / with the forceps of the storm."[6] The "drunkenness," the "demented chants," recall the slurred speech of the *lwa* (deities) of Haitian vodou; the spiced rum that is the drink of choice of Ogou, *lwa* of wars (and thus armed rebellion); and Dutty Boukman, the vodou priest whose ceremony at Bois-Caïman inaugurated the Haitian Revolution in 1791.[7] Invoking these broken memories, fleeing from the domination of simple prosody, "La verbe *marroner*" imagines Depestre's sweetening of Caribbean poetry as akin to sweetening language for easy consumption by Europeans, sweetening made possible with the sugar produced in Caribbean

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[5] Belinda Elizabeth Jack, *Negritude and Literary Criticism: The History and Theory of "Negro-African" Literature in French* (Wesport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 84.

[6] The original French text reads: "C'est un nuit de Seine / et moi je me souviens comme ivre / du chant dement de Boukman accouchant ton pays / aux forceps de l'orage"

[7] On vodou *lwa* and their performative manifestations in Haiti and the Haitian diaspora, see Karen McCarthy Brown, *Mama Lola: A Vodou Priestess in Brooklyn* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); as well as Donald J. Cosentino (ed.), *Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou* (Los Angeles: UCLA Fowler Museum, 1995). Brown's *Mama Lola* contains a detailed account of Ogou in "Ogou," 93-140. On the Haitian Revolution, see the classic interpretation in C.L.R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Touissant L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1989 [1963]). For a detailed historical account and analysis, including Boukman's ceremony at Bois-Caïman, see Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004).

sugar mills and plantations, sweetening produced with the labor of enslaved laborers in Martinique and Saint-Domingue:

> Is it true this season they're polishing up sonnets
> for us to do so would remind me too much of the sugary
> juice drooled over there by the distilleries of the mornes
> when slow skinny oxen make their rounds to the whine
> of mosquitos
>
> Bah! Depestre the poem is not a mill for
> grinding sugar cane absolutely not
> and if the rhymes are flies on ponds
> without rhymes
> for a whole season
> away from ponds
> under my persuasion
> let's laugh drink and *marroner* ourselves[8]

In "La verbe *marroner*," Césaire imagines the contested terrain of aesthetic practice as a landscape of memory divided between the repetitive droning of the mill-wheel and the freedom and invention fostered through the slave maroon experience. Escaping the oppressive plantation regime of traditional prosody is made possible by fleeing its mechanisms of control, an act

[8] The original French text reads: "C'est vrai ils arrondissent cette saison des sonnets / pour nous à le faire cela me rappellerait par trop / le jus sucré que bavent là-bas les distilleries des mornes / quand les lents boeufs maigres font leur rond au zonzon / des moustiques // Ouiche! Depestre la poème n'est pas un moulin à / passer de la canne à sucre ça non / et si les rimes sont mooches sur les mares / sans rimes / toutes une saison / lois des mares / moi te faisant raison / rions buvons et marronnons."

Césaire performs with his invention of the verb *marroner*. The intervention performed by *marroner*, James Clifford writes, is that it "makes rebellion and the remaking of culture – the historical maroon experience – into a *verb*."[9] For Césaire, the historic use of the noun *marronage* ("maroonage," a term encompassing both slave flight from plantations as well as the establishment of maroon communities) is insufficient, for its emphasis on isolation and solitariness belies the active, rebellious poetic performance necessary to counter the restricted movement of the plantation. In his analysis of the commodification and naming of African American musical genres, literary critic Nathaniel Mackey outlines the political stakes of this tense-change in black and white.[10] In figuring the experience not only of the plantation but of maroonage as a static space of either cultural domination or resistance (as nouns) means nothing less than "the erasure of black inventiveness by white appropriation . . . the domain of action and the ability to act suggested by *verb* is closed off by the hypostasis, paralysis, and arrest suggested by *noun* . . ."[11]

In this way, "La verbe *marroner*" re-animates the historical experience of slave flight into an active praxis with continued political and social resonance, both as a performance of racial identity and an anti-colonial tactic. In the first stanza, Césaire's words work through the slow hum of the sugar mill, their glossy polish filing in order against the page's left margin. But the production of sugar in the mills of the colonial Americas bred conditions of forced labor and violent surveillance, conditions that sought to restrict the autonomy of movement and cultural

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[9] Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture*, 181.

[10] Nathaniel Mackey, "Other: From Noun to Verb," in *The Jazz Cadence of American Culture*, ed. Robert G. O'Meally (New York: Columbia University Press), 513-532. Mackey is writing about the popularization and commodification of African American musical genres through the linguistic shift of their names. For Mackey, during the twentieth century the inventiveness and improvisation of *swing* was gradually forced into indicating a static genre characterized as a cheap imitation of African American musical dynamism.

[11] Mackey, "Other: From Noun to Verb," 514.

production of the enslaved Africans who labored on them. Thus, while the first stanza's structure may seem simple and traditional, by analogizing poems to plantations, Césaire shows how "simple" prosody limits expressive possibility and polices human movement, just as masters controlled the expression and movement of their slaves. With the uneven rhyme and pacing in the poem already established in the first stanza, by the second Césaire's words travel back and forth, breaking apart the order and simplicity favored by Aragon and endorsed by Depestre. Césaire scatters the broken histories of plantation slavery and maroonage across the page, like the scattering of bodies, histories, and fragmented memories across the black Atlantic, to remind Depestre once more that "The poem is not a mill for grinding sugar cane . . . let's drink and laugh and *marroner*."

. . .

The word "marroner" had never previously appeared in print. Césaire capitalizes on the word's ahistoricity, its jarring intervention in historically-grounded terrain, to do the aesthetic work of slave flight. Yet I argue that Césaire's move is neither anachronistic nor ahistorical. Not only are the historical experiences of maroonage and plantations foundational case studies in the intersection of politics and aesthetics, but to imagine maroonage as a verb was, and remains, necessary to the historical conception of the complex and contested relationships between plantation labor, slave flight, and the formation and suppression of maroon communities in the Americas. I situate the practice of maroonage as a dynamic mobile praxis that, following Edward Said's lead, moves across the seemingly evident boundaries between maroon communities and colonial plantations in the black Atlantic, re-mapping concepts of slavery, freedom, and race, while disorganizing and re-organizing strategies of empire along its way.[12] Just as Paul Gilroy's

[12] On "traveling theory," see Edward W. Said, "Traveling Theory," in *The World, the Text, and the Critic*

use of "the image of a ship – a living, micro-cultural, micro-political system in motion" provided the transport to re-animate blackness in the Atlantic, I position maroon communities as shifting, mobile, engines whose rebelliousness lies not in their opposition to the plantation regime, but in their dynamic disorganization and re-invention of the plantation economy as a colonial strategy and aesthetic landscaping practice.[13]

While I partially locate this argument in the slave plantation islands of the Caribbean, it is most at home where Depestre had exiled himself at the time of the publication of "La verbe *marroner*." "From the Seine," Césaire writes, "I send you my greetings in Brazil / to you to Bahia to all the saints to all the devils . . ."[14] It was there, just north of the city of São Salvador da Bahia de Todos os Santos ("Holy Savior of the Bay of All Saints," known commonly as Salvador), capital of the Bahia captaincy, that on September 2, 1763, a force of two hundred men under the command of Captain Joaquim da Costa Cardoso invaded and razed the maroon community of Buraco do Tatú. Located in Itapuã, a seaside district today at Salvador's northeastern corner, Buraco do Tatú was at the edge of the Recôncavo, a region populated by *engenhos*, or sugar plantations, that were the economic and social engines of northeastern Brazil and the Portuguese Empire. Cardoso's force arrived well-equipped for the battle. Brandishing grenadiers to blow through the settlement's thick fortifications, the militia was "ordered not to desist from fighting and not to retire from the forests until they had destroyed the entire settlement, captured its inhabitants, killed those who resisted, investigated the nearby forests, burned the huts and traps, and filled in the ditches."[15] Cardoso's men quickly overpowered the

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(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 226-248.

[13] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 4.

[14] "de la Seine je t'envoie au Brésil mon salut / à toi à Bahia à tous les saints à tous les diables . . ."

[15] This original copy of this letter, detailing the justification for, and account of, the destruction quilombo of Buraco do Tatú, is AHU, Bahia, Papeis avulsos, doc. 6449. The text of the letter was transcribed and published as

settlement's walls and its inhabitants. They wounded or captured sixty-one of the community's members, killed four, and forced the rest to flee. The captured were then taken back to Salvador for trial. Judges sentenced Antonio de Sousa, Buraco do Tatú's war captain, to a public flogging and life in the galleys. Theodoro, the community's head administrator, received further public lashings and ten years in the galleys, while the same fate met José Lopes, one of the defense's leaders. Thirty-one others whose only crime was living in Buraco do Tatú were branded with hot irons and sold into slavery in Salvador and the plantations of the Recôncavo.[16]

What had the members of Buraco do Tatú done to deserve such violent repression? Buraco do Tatú's invasion in particular was part of a campaign put in place by Dom Marcos José de Noronha e Brito, the Count of Arcos and Viceroy of Brazil, in 1760.[17] Since its founding in 1743 or 1744, Buraco do Tatú and its approximately two hundred residents had been the topic of concerns voiced by Salvador's residents and plantation owners in the Recôncavo.[18] A letter sent from Salvador to Francisco Xavier de Mendonça Furtado, then Portuguese Secretary of State for Overseas and Marine Possessions in Lisbon, describes the crimes committed by the residents of Buraco do Tatú that led to its invasion:

> … [C]omplaints have come repeatedly to the attention of the Government from

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"Officio do Governo interino para Francisco X. de Mendonça Furtado, no qual se refere á organização de uma exedição armada para atacar e aprisionar um grande grupo de negros, refugiados nas mattas; que sahiam ás estradas e vinham de noite á cidade para roubar. Bahia 14 de janeiro de 1764." *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional* 32 (1910): 44. From this point, I cite the text in the *Anais*, having confirmed it against the Portuguese original in the AHU. This text is also cited in full in Pedro Tomás Pedreira, *Os quilombos brasileiros* (Salvador: Editora Mensageiro da Fé, 1973) 129-131. For a translation of the entire letter into English, see "'The Armadillo's Hole': A Predatory *Quilombo* Near Bahia (1763)" in *Children of God's Fire: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil*, ed. Robert Edgar Conrad (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 379-381.

[16] AHU, Bahia, Papeis avulsos, doc. 6456.

[17] Stuart Schwartz, "The 'Mocambo': Slave Resistance in Colonial Bahia." *Journal of Social History* 3:4 (Summer 1970): 328.

[18] There is some understandable confusion over the exact date of establishment of the quilombo. The January 1764 letter simply states that the quilombo was established "twenty years ago," meaning if they were being precise, it could refer to 1743 (twenty years before the destruction) or 1744 (twenty years before the letter was written).

> residents of plantations or *roças* (subsistence plots or farms) situated in the forests less than two leagues from this city. They are exposed to frequent robberies at the hands of *aquilombado* blacks living in the forests, they leave them to commit robberies and great destruction on farms and their owners, assaulting the dwellings of those places, stealing all of its production (*produção*). On the roads, they follow and seek to rob wayfarers of clothes and money. They especially target black men and women, who come into the city each day to sell the foodstuffs they produce on their *roças*. The members of the quilombo also return the same or following day with the profits from those sales; carrying off to the *mocambo* by force those black women which appeared most attractive to them, and finally, entering the city streets at night to provide themselves with gunpowder, lead, and further things needed for their defense, having already corresponded with other blacks in the same city or *roças*, and already with some whites who hoped that the quilombo members would not kill them and leave their homes alone and not destroy their crops. This motivates the government to gather precise information about the facts of the existence and strength of such a *quilombo*.[19]

I will return to this letter, and the justification for the destruction of Buraco do Tatú, throughout this chapter. In what follows, I read through the documents and maps associated with Buraco do Tatú as case studies to argue that the motivation behind the violent suppression of Buraco do Tatú was not in its opposition or counter-example to the regime of plantation slavery. Indeed, the

[19] "Officio do Governo interino para Francisco X. de Mendonça Furtado . . ." *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional* 32 (1910): 44.

fate of Buraco do Tatú was not unique: of the hundreds of quilombos that existed throughout Brazil's colonial history, almost all met their end through coordinated attacks at the hands of the colonial militias or punitive expeditions. Rather, I argue that maroon communities, as active counter-colonial praxes, rendered visible a vision of the unmaking and disordering of the plantation from the inside, a mental image I term "the plantation, *aquilombado*." In mapping this concept, I begin by highlighting a set of word choices that speak to my main concern in this chapter: the relationship (alternately antagonistic or ambivalent) between plantations and maroon communities, and the articulation of that relationship in order to legitimate the violent suppression of maroon communities in Brazil. In other words, while this letter lists a set of crimes to justify Buraco do Tatú's destruction, at the same time it tries to work through the very definitions of plantations, maroon communities, and the boundaries of slavery and freedom that maroonage called into question. As such, I begin by contextualizing the choices of three words italicized in the above letter to Mendonça Furtado: *mocambo*, *quilombo* and *aquilombado*.

The Nouns "Mocambo" and "Quilombo"

The letter to Secretary Mendonça Furtado describes Buraco do Tatú as a *mocambo* and a *quilombo*. Both words refer to maroon settlements in Brazil, and were commonly used by Portuguese colonial authorities in the second half of the eighteenth century. In addition, both "mocambo" and "quilombo" would also likely have been a self-designation used by residents (called *mocambeiros* or *quilombolas*) of the settlement. From roughly the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, most colonial documents in the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic world referred to such communities as mocambos. "Mocambo" is descended from *mu-kambo*, an Ambundu (Northern Mbundu; present-day northwest Angola) word indicating a place of refuge or a

concealed hideout.[20] Its use peaked in colonial Brazil as a designator for fugitive or maroon slave settlements from the seventeenth through the second half of the eighteenth century.

By the late 1700s, however, "mocambo" emerged as interchangeable with "quilombo" in Portuguese documents, principally in reference to the invasion and destruction of settlements like Buraco do Tatú. In sixteenth century central Africa *ki-lombo*, also an Mbundu word, designated a male warrior initiation society that de-emphasized natal descent ties.[21] It was primarily a reference to both the social organization and armed bands of a central African group Portuguese merchant Duarte Lopes originally termed the "Jaga."[22] The African ki-lombo developed in tandem with early Portuguese presence in west central Africa, which was marked by ambiguous and shifting territorial claims and near-constant inter-kingdom warfare. In 1575, the Portuguese established Luanda with the dual goal of forming an administrative African foothold as well as a central slave trading post. For the first three decades, the Portuguese were met with great resistance. Conflicts between the Kingdom of Ndongo and Portugal lasted until the end of the

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[20] Pedro Paulo de Abreu Funari, "A Arqueologia de Palmares: Sua contribuição para o conhecimento da história da cultura afro-americana," in *Liberdade por um fio: História dos quilombos no Brasil*, org. João José Reis and Flávio dos Santos Gomes (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1996), 28; Schwartz, "The 'Mocambo,'" 316, n12.

[21] Joseph C. Miller, "The Imbangala and the Chronology of Central African History," *The Journal of African History* 13:4 (1972): 560, n41; Joseph C. Miller, *Kings and Kinsmen: Early Mbundu States in Angola* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 151-175; James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 50.

[22] Jan Vansina, "Quilombos on São Tomé, or in Search of Original Sources," *History in Africa* 23 (1996): 453. The "Jaga" have a complex historiography. "Jaga" is the name given by the Portuguese to a series of groups (likely Imbangala as well as Yaka) responsible for invading territory in the Kingdom of Kongo and the Kingdom of Ndongo (Angola) in the second half of the sixteenth century. The original description of the "Jaga" originates in a memoir Lopes gave as a series of interviews written and edited by Italian scholar Filippo Pigafetta. See Filippo Pigafetta, *A Report of the Kingdom of Congo and the Surrounding Countries; Drawn out of the Writings and Discourses of the Portuguese Duarte Lopez, by Filippo Pigafetta, in Rome, 1591*, trans. Margarite Hutchinson (London: John Murray, 1881). Joseph C. Miller was the first to critically read Duarte's history and establish that the "Jaga" never existed as a group; more likely, they functioned as a projection of Christian sin and punishment allegories onto a series of Central African groups that did attack Portuguese bastions on the coast. See Miller, "Requiem for the 'Jaga,'" *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 13, Cahier 49 (1973): 121-149. Miller's approach was re-examined and nuanced by many later scholars: see principally John K. Thornton, "A Resurrection for the Jaga," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 18, Cahier 69/70 (1978): 223-227. For an overview of the history of scholarly debates over the "Jaga," see Beatrix Heinze, "The Extraordinary Journey of the Jaga Through the Centuries: Critical Approaches to Precolonial Angolan Sources," trans. Katja Rieck. *History in Africa* 34 (2007): 67-101.

sixteenth century, with the Portuguese nearly driven out of the region by Ndongo forces in 1579.[23] By 1624, the Portuguese were able to solidify their territorial claims and began to expand both their land and their slaving economy. This expansion, however, pulled them into a series of wars between neighboring kingdoms, a series of conflicts John K. Thornton refers to as the "War of Ndongo Succession."[24]

The War of Ndongo Succession created a sharp increase in prisoners of war, which the Portuguese then exploited as slaves, sent primarily to Brazil through established Portuguese ports on the Atlantic coast. It was in this context of shifting territorial boundaries and political alliances that ki-lombos emerged as a "practical solution to the ruptures in natal kinship that were created by war, famine, and forced migration in central Africa during the era of the slave trade."[25] By necessity, ki-lombos incorporated both persons and cultural perspectives from the Imbangala, Kongo, Lunda, Mbundu, and Ovimbundu, among others.[26] However, as part of a male warrior initiation society, ki-lombo members also underwent rituals that effectively erased the distinct ethnic origins and lineages of their members, as well as filial natal descent ties, and re-cast them for the ki-lombo society.[27] Together, this society constructed permanent fortified military encampments as precarious, and conflicted, homes for the ki-lombo.[28]

The ki-lombo, both as a reference to a settlement and a system of social organization, likely left Africa between 1576 and 1600, when it is estimated that over 100,000 enslaved persons were sent through Portuguese ports in west central Africa bound for the Americas and

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[23] John K. Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1800*, 2nd edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 100.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 50.
[26] Kabengele Munanga, "Origem e histórico do quilombo na África." *Revista USP* 28 (December 1995 / February 1996): 60.
[27] Ibid, 50.
[28] Ibid, 59.

Europe, nearly twelve times more than in the prior quarter-century.[29] Ninety percent of these were on Portuguese ships.[30] With this rise of central Africans in Brazil through the 1600s, by 1691 both African and Portuguese had re-appropriated the ki-lombo, now rendered in Portuguese orthography as "quilombo," and applied it to the suburban and hinterland fugitive communities that were a constant and ubiquitous byproduct of plantation slavery in Brazil. The use of the term "quilombo," then, increases throughout the eighteenth century in tandem with the rise in militant and violent suppression of these communities by Portuguese militias and *capitães-do-mato* ("bush captains," a position created specifically to re-capture fugitive slaves), including the invasion and razing of Buraco do Tatú outside of Salvador in 1763. By the first decades of the nineteenth century, "quilombo" was singularly and universally applied to communities of fugitive slaves in Brazil.

This conception of quilombo as a static, militarized opposition to the colonial plantation economy continued to inflect popular and scholarly perceptions of quilombos throughout the twentieth century, particularly as projections of colonial and post-colonial ambivalences of race, nation, subjecthood, and culture. Scholars such as Nina Rodrigues, Arthur Ramos, and Edison Carneiro seized on the unique longevity, high population, and social organization of the seventeenth-century settlement of Palmares (in present-day Alagoas state), establishing it as a paragon of African cultural retention and resistance to Brazilian plantation slavery.[31] As such, despite Palmares' singularity in quilombo history, most quilombo studies through the twentieth century would come to focus specifically on Palmares and the search for African origins inside

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[29] TASTD, http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces. Accessed 26 August 2013.
[30] Ibid.
[31] See foundational works in Afro-Brazilian studies: Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, *Os Africanos no Brasil,* 2nd edition (São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1935); Arthur Ramos, *O negro brasileiro* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1935); Arthur Ramos, *A aculturação negra no Brasil* (São Paulo: Nacional, 1942); and Edison Carneiro, *O quilombo dos Palmares* (São Paulo: Editora Brasiliense Limitada, 1947).

of it, a charge that relates closely to Melville Herskotivs' search for "Africanisms."[32] Roger Bastide, building on this foundation, noted in 1960 that "It would seem that in most cases [of quilombos], as in Palmares, we are dealing with 'tribal regression,' a kind of return to Africa."[33] R.K. Kent, writing in 1965, also positioned Palmares as a legitimate "African state in Brazil."[34] At the same time, Clóvis Moura employed an Afro-Marxist approach in which quilombos like Palmares functioned as case studies for the failed establishment of an Afro-Marxist political praxis.[35] For Moura, quilombos, as attempts at the formation of communal, independent, self-sufficient states, failed to achieve anti-capitalist self-determination due to quilombos' continued reliance on the capitalist slavery system as a source of trade and theft. Fugitive slaves, in addition to opposing slavery and attempting to fashion African worldviews, partook in an ultimately unsuccessful Marxist class struggle against the proto-capitalist plantation economy. Through the end of the twentieth century, the search for cultural survivals and the failed establishment of Afro-Marxist practice continued to dominate scholarly perspectives on quilombos.[36]

I wish to emphasize two points regarding the genesis and dissemination of the term

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[32] Melville Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958 [1941]).

[33] Roger Bastide, "The Other *Quilombos*" in *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas*, ed. Richard Price(Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 195. See also Roger Bastide, *The African Religions of Brazil: Toward a Sociology of the Interpenetration of Civilizations*, trans. Helen Sebba (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978). While Bastide's essay is taken directly from *The African Religions of Brazil*, I prefer Price's translation of Bastide's original French to Sebba's.

[34] R.K. Kent, "Palmares: An African State in Brazil." *The Journal of African History* 6:2 (1965): 161-175. Though Kent's research was foundational for a generation of quilombo researchers, Robert Nelson Anderson has summarized and critiqued his approach in light of recent findings; see Robert Nelson Anderson, "The *Quilombo* of Palmares: A New Overview of a Maroon State in Seventeenth-Century Brazil." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 28:3 (October 1996): 545-566.

[35] See principally: Clóvis Moura, *Rebeliões da Senzala: Quilombos, Insurreições, Guerilhas* 3rd edition (São Paulo: Livraria Editora Ciências Humanas, 1981); Clóvis Moura, *Os quilombos e a rebelião negra*, 3rd edition (São Paulo: Brasiliense, 1983); and Clóvis Moura, *Quilombos: Resistência ao escravismo* (São Paulo: Editora Ática, 1987). For an analysis of Moura's work summarizing his perspective as a translation of Marxism through black praxis, see Fábio Nogueira de Oliveira, "Modernidade, pólitica, e praxis negra no pensamento de Clóvis Moura." *PLURAL: Revista do Programa de Pos-Graduação em Sociologia da USP* 18:1 (2011): 45-64.

[36] For an excellent overview of this point, including a thorough historiography of quilombo studies at the end of the twentieth century, see Reis and Gomes, "Introdução: Uma história da liberdade" in *Liberdade por um fio*, 11-14.

"quilombo" before proceeding. First, the aforementioned studies understood quilombos in Brazil as static spaces constructed in direct opposition to the plantation and slavery economy, in other words, imagining maroonage as the very "noun" which Césaire disowned with his usage of *marroner*. However, "ki-lombo," in Africa, *already* designated a black Atlantic system of transcultural negotiation and lineage erasure that was formed not from an essentialized "traditional" African cultural practice, or from a static and entrenched opposition to the plantation economy, but as a dynamic praxis that was both a product of, and response to, ongoing conflicts and internal wars that were both generated and exploited by the transatlantic slave trade. Second, one of the key etymological distinctions between "mocambo" and "quilombo" is that while the former refers to a hideout or place of refuge, the latter is defined through its militarization and ritual disassociation with outsiders. In fact, as James H. Sweet has noted, though Palmares existed as a maroon community from roughly 1605 to 1694, "almost all of our knowledge about Palmares comes from documents written in the 1680s and 1690s," and thus it is "highly unlikely" that "Palmares, or any of the early runaway communities in Brazil, were called quilombos by their inhabitants, or by the Portuguese."[37] The first use of "quilombo" as opposed to "mocambo" in Brazilian colonial documents to refer to a maroon community is actually in reference to Palmares, in 1691, in the midst of a series of coordinated Portuguese campaigns against Palmares during the last two decades of the 1600s.[38] In other words, it is not an accident that the proliferation of the noun "quilombo" goes hand-in-hand with the active campaigns to destroy these "irritating nodules of resistance" throughout colonial Brazil, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[39] The use of "quilombo," then, as the pre-

[37] James H. Sweet, "African Identity and Slave Resistance in the Portuguese Atlantic," in *The Atlantic World and Virginia, 1550-1624*, ed. Peter C. Mancall (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007): 240-241.
[38] Funari, "A Arqueologia de Palmares" in *Liberdade por um fio*, 32.
[39] Schwartz, "The 'Mocambo,'" 328.

figuration of a static space held in opposition to the plantation, at the same time defines the distinction between the quilombo and the plantation, and thus legitimates their suppression. In tandem, the continued focus on "quilombo" in Brazilian historiography as a space of resistance further concretizes the distinction between quilombos and plantations, and thus would interpret their destruction as a heroic, yet ultimately futile, effort to oppose and resist the European hegemony and exploitative capitalism of the plantation slavery economy. My argument is, however, that this historiography has obscured the ways in which quilombos were understood both as nouns *and* verbs even in colonial documents – and that integrating this verb-ing of the quilombo opens up not only new interpretive pathways for the historicity of quilombo practice, but also as a historical lens to understand the real danger and reason for quilombo suppression, a possibility articulated in the verb "aquilombar."

The Verb "Aquilombar"

The noun "quilombo" reinforces a perceived opposition between plantations and maroon communities while also legitimating the fierce and violent repression of settlements like Buraco do Tatú. Yet my goal here is to trace how the practice of maroonage unnerved precisely that distinction, and how that unnerving of colonial authority was worked out in visual culture and aesthetic practice. As noted in the letter to Mendonça Furtado detailing the crimes of Buraco do Tatú, the residents of plantations and the operators of subsistence plots (*roças*) were "exposed to frequent robberies at the hands of *aquilombado* blacks living in the forests." This designation, "aquilombado," (literally, "quilombo-ed") is the past participle of the Portuguese reflexive verb "aquilombar-se;" meaning to self-identify with the quilombo. In other words, the aesthetic-political praxis of maroonage-as-verb that Césaire invents in French in 1955 had already existed

in Portuguese colonial documents since at least the eighteenth century. Moreover, those writing to Mendonça Furtado about Buraco do Tatú understood this active association with the quilombo not only as an identity designation – that the Africans and Brazilian-born slaves living in Buraco do Tatú were "aquilombado"– but that the use of the past participle indicated these persons had completed an identity transformation that permanently *dis*-identified them with the slave-ocracy.

As such, I want to forward "aquilombar" and its past participle, "aquilombado" as an active praxis (a verb) held in contrast to the perception of quilombos as static spaces opposed to the plantation. This move is indebted to previous re-imaginings of quilombo history as a praxis, especially in the work of prolific Afro-Brazilian anti-racism activist and cultural theorist Abdias do Nascimento. Nascimento's "quilombismo" movement sought to reclaim the quilombo not as a static space of opposition, but a reclamatory, radicalist, anti-imperialist, Brazilian nationalist, pan-African, Afrocentric political strategy and epistemology.[40] As a "complex of African social phenomena" and an "Afro-Brazilian praxis," quilombismo sought to migrate the history of quilombos out from the rural hinterlands to occupy Brazil's entrenched systems of urban inequality, manifesting in samba schools, Candomblé terreiros, and social gathering places for blacks legalized by the government.[41] Nascimento's quilombismo, like my gerund-attachment of

[40] Nascimento developed his philosophy through a series of publications. See Abdias do Nascimento, *O Quilombismo: Documentos de uma militância pan-africanista* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1980); "Quilombismo: An Afro-Brazilian Political Alternative." *Journal of Black Studies* 11:2 (December 1980): 141-178; and "Uma mensagem do Quilombismo," in *O Negro Revoltado*, org. Abdias do Nascimento (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Nova Fronteira, 1982).

[41] Nascimento, "Quilombismo," 152. Nascimento's re-imagination of "quilombo" as a contemporary praxis follows what Ilka Boaventura Leite has described as the process by which "quilombo" has come to "signify the enjoyment of full citizenship through its inclusion in land regularization, housing, health, and educational and cultural policies." See Leite, "The Transhistorical, Juridical-Formal, and Post-Utopian Quilombo," in *New Approaches to Resistance in Brazil and Mexico*, ed. John Gledhill and Patience A. Schell (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 251. In this way, "resistance" as manifested in the idea of the quilombo becomes folded into the order of the state, and the struggle for freedom is suddenly everyone's struggle (263). This universality of quilombo-resistance and its enfolding into Brazilian nationalism, I would argue, also work to obscure the historical legacies of quilombos in rural Brazil and their current quest for autonomous land rights. See Rapoport Delegation on Afro-Brazilian Land Rights, *Between the Law and Their Land: Afro-Brazilian Quilombo Communities' Struggle for Land Rights, A Report by the Rapoport Delegation on Afro-Brazilian Land Rights* (Austin: The Bernard and

aquilombado, does not limit itself spatially, but collapses boundaries of space and cognition, as "quilombist liberation" functions as an antidote, a counterprocess of knowledge and knowledge-making, in opposition to "Eurocentric mental colonization."[42]

At the same time, I want to insist that the migration of quilombo praxis across the borders of Brazilian society is not only a reclamatory (and thus potentially ahistorical) move. This charge dovetails with recent scholarly emphasis on quilombo movement, dynamism, and invention I privilege here, spearheaded by the work of João José Reis and Flávio dos Santos Gomes.[43] As Reis and Gomes have pointed out, the twentieth-century historiography of quilombos traced earlier paid little attention to the complex and often contradictory modes of resistance and participation that quilombolas used to articulate and define the new cultural spaces they created. In the introduction to their sweeping edited volume on the history and historiography of quilombos in Brazil, *Liberdade por um fio* ("Liberty by a thread"), Reis and Gomes characterize the movements and shifting alliances of quilombos and quilombolas as indicative of what historian Barbara Fields called the "constant movement" of the condition of liberty; occupying "the countryside and forests; encircling and penetrating cities, villages, mines, sugar mills, and plantations" and even "fighting slavery and committing slavery."[44] Meanwhile, in his *A hidra e os pântanos*, Gomes traces the complex network of political, social, and economic exchange

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Audre Rapoport Center for Human Rights and Justice, University of Texas at Austin, 2008). http://www.utexas.edu/law/centers/humanrights/projects_and_publications/brazil-report.pdf. The report notes that "This debate over definition [of quilombo] –and the economic and social interests represented by this debate—has plagued the regulation of the quilombo titling process and communities' efforts to make rights claims" (8), thus placing paramount political importance on the shifting and context-dependent definition of "quilombo," a point I emphasize in this chapter.

[42] Nascimento, "Quilombismo," 160.

[43] See principally: Reis and Gomes (orgs.), *Liberdade por um fio*; and Flávio dos Santos Gomes, *A hidra e os pântanos: Mocambos, quilombos, e comunidades de fugitivos no Brasil (Séculos XVII-XIX)* (São Paulo: Editora UNESP, 2005).

[44] Reis and Gomes, "Introdução: Uma história da liberdade" in *Liberdade por um fio*: 23. Reis and Gomes are quoting from Barbara J. Fields, *Slavery and Freedom on the Middle Ground: Maryland During the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 193.

between enslaved and free blacks, indigenous groups, urban, rural, and plantation alliances, and attacking groups that made up quilombo life in colonial Brazil. He provocatively suggests that this web is best characterized as a "bog" or "swamp" *(os pântanos*), and the quilombos themselves a "Hydra," (*Hidra*) the mythical beast that "lived in flooded lands, evoking the frustration of repression expeditions, that constantly 'mired' in the social environment around quilombos."[45] And like the mythical Hydra, quilombos are regenerating: when one was destroyed, another grew in its place.[46]

This constant movement is further emphasized by Reis in describing the suburban quilombos of Salvador around the turn of the nineteenth century. As a quilombo in suburban Salvador, Buraco do Tatú occupied a position that carefully negotiated its position between Bahia's urban center and the sugar plantations of the Recôncavo. The population of suburban quilombos like Buraco do Tatú was characterized by an ever-shifting relationship to freedom and autonomy, while the quilombos themselves were similarly "mobile": "The city was surrounded by mobile quilombos and religious meeting places; if destroyed in one place, they reappeared elsewhere, nourished as they were by the uninterrupted stream of slaves capitalizing on the relative freedom of urban slavery."[47] Suburban quilombos, especially those also located in proximity to significant plantation regions like the Recôncavo, were thus both easily created and easily destroyed. They likely had few permanent residents, and survived instead on a steady stream of disenchanted slaves from the city or neighboring plantations, who would spend some time on the quilombo before returning to their masters. Subsistence, too, was volatile and dependent on small subsistence plots inside the quilombo, as well as predation of surrounding

[45] Robert W. Slenes, "Apresentação: O Escravismo por um fio?" in Gomes, *A hidra e os pântanos*, 16.
[46] Gomes, *A hidra e os pântanos*, 35.
[47] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 41.

plantations or homes. If slaves did decide to remain in quilombos, quilombos were generally short-lived: quilombolas were discovered and raided by slave hunters, or captured during more militarized quilombo invasions. Thus, these quilombos' proximity to urban centers and plantations fostered their instability and indeterminacy. It is this dynamic movement, constant creation and destruction, that I take up not only as emphasized by the verb "aquilombar," but also as revealing of the logic of violent suppression of quilombos. In other words, the threat that quilombos posed was not only in the very real violence and theft they committed in Salvador and to the plantation economy, but in rendering visible the artificial, and ultimately mobile, boundaries of slavery and freedom that are forgotten in positioning the quilombo as the antagonistic opposite of the plantation.

Armed with this perspective, we can return to read the crimes committed by Buraco do Tatú and its inhabitants. To summarize: officials cited Buraco do Tatú's residents for the routine theft of livestock, goods, and money from engenhos, which caused great fear among plantation owners and workers for their lives and livelihoods. The maroons' most frequent targets, however, were not white plantation owners but enslaved blacks, whom they assaulted as slaves made their way to Salvador on market days to sell crops from their personal subsistence gardens (*roças*). Officials also cited the members of Buraco do Tatú for the abduction of black women to be paired with members of Buraco do Tatú's overwhelmingly male population. These accusations, of the theft of crops and foodstuffs from plantations, the interception of slave gardens' produce on the way to market, the abduction of women, and the formation of strategic and/or coerced alliances with plantation owners and slaves all share a common thread, summed up in the following accusation: that Buraco do Tatú robbed the plantation of "all of its

production."[48]

I readily admit I am taking translational liberties with this phrase, as the *produção* I render here as "production" would be more accurately translated as "livestock" in the eighteenth century. But my blurring of the distinctions between cattle, agricultural production, and the reproduction of enslaved bodies as a way to proliferate the plantation system is not necessarily ahistorical. Jennifer L. Morgan has argued that in the plantation economy, the material value of enslaved African women rested in their very ability to produce and reproduce an enslaved workforce through child-bearing.[49] In mid-seventeenth century Barbados, enslaved women in their childbearing years were referred to as "increasers," a term that previously was used for livestock.[50] As such, the racialization and enslavement of women's bodies, and their valuation in terms of reproduction, worked across the distinction between human and livestock, here manifested in my ambiguous translation of "produção."[51]

Thus these listed crimes, this recording of aquilombado blacks as robbing the plantation of its production, suggests that the threat posed by quilombos to the plantation economy and the slavocratic order was not in their opposition or counter-example to plantation slavery. Instead, "aquilombado" highlights quilombos' association with alternate practices of reproduction that both dis- and re-organize the enforced taxonomies of the plantation economy. If the basis of the Brazilian slavocracy was its self-proliferation and self-reproduction through not only the production of cash crops like sugarcane, but also the regulated reproduction of the plantation model and of the enslaved persons on whose labor such reproduction took place, then the anxiety

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[48] "Officio do Governo interino para Francisco X. de Mendonça Furtado . . ." *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional* 32 (1910): 44.
[49] Jennifer L. Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
[50] Ibid, 82.
[51] Ibid, 83, 105.

articulated in "aquilombado" was the possibility that these crops, these landscapes, and these persons would dismantle the plantation from the inside by forwarding alternate reproductive practices that rendered visible the artifice of all the plantation regime had created.

As such, I seek to give space not only to the fear that slaves would dismantle the plantation system from the inside, but that the agricultural systems and production of Edenic labor carried an agency which could also be aquilombado. While in colonial documents detailing the crimes committed by quilombolas, including the letter to Mendonça Furtado, the designation "aquilombado" is applied singularly to human beings (specifically, enslaved persons who were found living in a given quilombo at the time of its destruction), I remain equally invested in utilizing aquilombado as a historical praxis that can also be applied to the very modes of reproduction that were the basis of the plantation economy. For example, on April 6, 1797, Fernando José de Portugal, Governor of Bahia, sent a report to Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, then Portuguese Secretary of State for Overseas and Marine Possessions, detailing the invasion and destruction of the quilombos of Orobó and Andaraí in Bahia the previous year. Located "thirty or forty leagues" from Cachoeira, the two quilombos and their inhabitants were cited for crimes similar to those of Buraco do Tatú: ransacking homes, kidnapping enslaved, maiden, and married women; stealing cattle; and destroying farmland, in addition to other crimes.[52] Portugal reported to Coutinho:

> Being destroyed the two Quilombos . . . called Orobó and Andrahi, and in them was found plantations of Cassava, Yams, rice, some sugarcane, Fruits and other

[52] AHU, Bahia, Papeis avulsos, doc. 14951. "Aviso do Marques de Lanços ao secretario de Estado da Marinha e Ultramar D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho"; AHU, Baia-CA, Doc. 17955, "Requerimento de Severino Pereira, Capitão mor das Entradas e Assaltos do districto de S. José das Itapororocas da Capitania da Bahia, Chefe da Milicia effectiva da reducção dos escravos foragidos e dos fortificados nos Quilombos ou coitos do mesmo districto..."

> foodstuffs, which were sustaining them. Thirteen slaves were arrested, among them male and female Africans, and children, that were delivered to their respective Lords. A large number of these same slaves had, they say, fled recently, and were *aquilombados* . . . there are indications, that some fled to another further Quilombo called dos Supins. By order it was also destroyed . . .[53]

What then was aquilombado in this account? On one hand, thirteen men, women, and children whose names the archive chose not to preserve. But Portugal's (the man, and perhaps symbolically the country) erasure of these personal histories makes all the more noticeable the recorded names of what I suggest were also aquilombado: the staple crops of the plantation economy (such as rice and sugarcane), and with them the subsistence plots (*roças*) that in these quilombos had fled the watchful eye of the plantation overseer.

That Buraco do Tatú would disrupt and redirect the practices and products of the plantation economy is implicit in the quilombo's name. Meaning "Armadillo's Hole," the exact origin of the name is unknown. It could have been bestowed on the quilombo by either its residents or outsiders. The analogy of an armadillo for the quilombo's disruption of the plantation would have been a short conceptual leap from the perspective of European plantation owners. Eighteenth century European natural history descriptions of armadillos (animals endemic to the Americas) define them, like quilombos, as scourges of plantation agriculture and barriers to sanctioned productivity. In his *General Zoology* of 1800, British naturalist George Shaw presents a view of a twelve-banded armadillo (Figure 1.1).[54] Shaw describes how

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[53] AHU, Bahia-CA, Papeis avulsos, doc. 18173. "Officio do Governador D. Fernando José de Portugal para D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, no qual participa a destruição dos Quilombos ou Mocambos denominados Orobô e Andrahy, no districto da Villa da Cachoeira."

[54] George Shaw, *General Zoology or Systematic Natural History*. Vol. 1, Part 1, "Mammalia." (London: Printed for G. Kearsley, 1800).

armadillos construct deep burrows with their strong claws, and how they "wander about chiefly at night, and devour various roots and grain; and are, therefore, considered as injurious to plantations."[55] For a settlement already held in opposition and distinct counter-production to the plantation regime, it would seem apt to give Buraco do Tatú the name of a nuisance animal whose underground dwellings disrupt crop growth.

At the same time, in his painstaking and revealing analysis of Kongo wordplay in Brazilian *jongo* slave songs, Robert W. Slenes reveals that the symbolism of the armadillo would have had significant symbolic import for Kongo and near-Kongo peoples, who likely comprised a majority of residents of Buraco do Tatú.[56] In southwestern São Paulo captaincy, some Africans were recorded calling armadillos "incaca," a word Slenes relates etymologically to the kikongo *nkaka*, meaning pangolin.[57] Pangolins and their hides retain a close ritual association with chiefs and ritual leaders, and potentially to quilombo leaders as well.[58] Through armadillos, nature's most productive and elusive burrowers and diggers, through armadillos enslaved central Africans in Brazil could explore metaphors not only of digging, but the tireless search for productive pathways out, or through, the plantation.[59] Armadillos were especially known for their ability to dig backwards and retreat into their holes to avoid detection and escape; thus, the idea of the quilombo as an "armadillo's hole" would be a perfect metaphor for the ways in which quilombolas were able to escape detection and capture even in close proximity to Salvador and the Recôncavo.

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[55] Shaw, *General Zoology*, 186.
[56] Robert W. Slenes, "'I Come from Afar, I Come Digging': Kongo and Near-Kongo Metaphors in *Jongo* Lyrics," in *Cangoma Calling: Spirits and Rhythms of Freedom in Brazilian Jongo Slavery Songs*, ed. Pedro Meira Monteiro and Michael Stone, 2013: 65-76. Retrieved from http://www.laabst.net/docs/CangomaCalling_OneFileBook1_7mb.pdf
[57] Ibid, 74.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid, 75.

But "buraco," in Portuguese, carries a second connotation which remains out of sight in Shaw's illustration of the armadillo: "Buraco" is also the Portuguese word for "orifice." This sexual wordplay, in fact, remains associated with armadillos, as males of all armadillo species have a disproportionately long penis given their average body size.[60] This, combined with the aforementioned digging and plowing metaphors – "burrowing" into holes – elucidates a vivid sexual metaphor in which the quilombo is cast as the domineering inseminator of a feminized landscape. On one level, as noted in the letter to Mendonça Furtado, the residents of Buraco do Tatú were overwhelmingly male, and cited for kidnapping women to bring them back to the quilombo. As such, if Buraco do Tatú's crime was robbing the plantation system of its "production," including the oversight of the regulated production of subsistence and agricultural crops, then the alternate practices of reproduction potentially fostered through the quilombo also included the illicit reproduction of enslaved bodies. For example, in her analysis of the efforts to "refine" the toxic perception of the nineteenth-century Jamaican landscape in order to allow for plantation cultivation by British landowners, Kay Dian Kriz has argued that the goal of cultivating the landscape for colonial implantation was closely tied to its ability to be refined for the entry of European females.[61] White women, she argued, otherwise would have difficulty navigating the sexual terrain and politics of white masters and slavery in the Caribbean colony. As such, the material and representational practices of colonial plantation reproduction were understood as metaphors not only for Catholic-sanctioned models of heterosexual reproduction, but the preparation and cultivation of foreign landscapes in order to prepare them for insemination by colonial models of reproduction.

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[60] Slenes, "'I Come from Afar, I Come Digging,'" in *Cangoma Calling*, 71.

[61] Kay Dian Kriz, "Torrid Zones and Detoxified Landscapes: Picturing Jamaica, 1825-1840," in *Sugar, Slavery, and the Culture of Refinement: Picturing the British West Indies 1700-1840* (New Haven: Yale University Press and the Paul Mellon Centre for the Study of British Art, 2008), 157-194.

The word "buraco" appears, then, in concert and contrast to this formulation. It appears in Portuguese inquisition records of the sixteenth and seventeenth century as evidence in trials against those accused of what was termed sodomy, but actually was a willing noncompliance with established Western European sex divisions and gender roles. In one 1556 case discussed by historian James H. Sweet, a third-gender native of modern-day Benin, operating in the Azores under the name Vitória, utilized sensual gestures and clothing associated with popular conceptions of femininity to further her business as a prostitute.[62] At the same time, friends and acquaintances provided conflicting reports of her biological sex, and others noticed her wearing hats – a man's activity. At her inquisition hearing, she insisted she had the "buraco" of a woman; while Portuguese doctors conducted an invasive medical test and determined that Vitória had a penis, which she hid by tying it to her leg with a red ribbon. Fearful of the sin of transgressing established sexual dichotomies, Vitoria's buraco, and her actions with it, were harshly punished with life in the galleys. Just as in Brazilian plantations, the inquisition feared and repressed models and the potential proliferation of (potentially African) kinship, gender, and reproduction among the empire's subjects.

Using the visual-textual metaphors of the armadillo's plantation disruption and sexual prowess and Vitoria's story as a launching point, I use "Buraco do Tatú" as a double-entendre to think through the ways in which queer practices of reproduction exposed the ambivalence and indeterminacy of colonial landscaping practices. The plantation's proliferation of sugarcane agriculture, in this sense, was also the proliferation and enforcement of heteronormative sexuality and productivity; a conception of reproduction that worked to idealize the artful labor of sugar plantations. In a 1718 print, J.D. Herlein presents an image of a male and female slave

[62] Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 53-54.

amongst the endless bounty of a sugarcane field in Suriname (Figure 1.2). The couple's solitary, relaxed position in the garden evokes Christianity's prototypical heternormative couple, Adam and Eve, at home in their own Garden of Eden. At left, the man stands with a shovel in the ground, evoking he and his partner's continued production of sugarcane as well as the inherent enslavement of their future offspring; while at right, the woman's hand covers a basket of fruit, evidence of further spoils in their garden, marking both her fertility as crop-grower and mother. The visual rhymes and puns in this image, then, refigure the "hell" of plantation life as a productive, primordial Garden of Paradise.

Given this metaphor, it should not be surprising that on at least one occasion in colonial Brazil, quilombos were fought not with grenades and guns, but with colonial landscaping practices that tied the proliferation of Catholic models of reproduction to the reproduction of the regulated practices of plantation agriculture. On October 17, 1744, the municipal council of Sabará, Minas Gerais, sent a letter to King João V informing him of the "great and multiple insults" and "general damnation" that quilombolas were committing in and around the city. They requested the King to authorize the Governor of the captaincy to

> "[H]ave two hundred married couples brought and transported to Minas Gerais, situating fifty couples in each of the four sections of Minas Gerais, on plots that the Governor will determine, giving them uncultivated and vacant scrub, and there they must plant their *roças* to thwart the quilombos, and de-infest the roads of these Raiders."[63]

[63] AHU, Brasil, Papeis avulsos, doc. 807: "CARTA dos oficiais da camara de Sabará ao Rei Dom Joao V sobre os grandes insultos que cometem os negros fugidos e os prejuizos que causam a Fazenda; solicitando que das aldeias dos tapuias de Sao Paulo se tirem 200 casais e se transportem para as Minas, dando-lhes matos incultos e devolutos para plantarem suas roças para dali sirem para desbaratar os quilombos e desinfestar os caminhos dos salteadores."

Here, by giving land to these transplanted married couples, the municipal council sought to combat quilombos through the proliferation of Edenic agriculture populated with productive plots and productive couples. Church-sanctioned heteronormative sexuality, marriage practices, and gender identities are here clearly figured as effective weapons against the "uncultivated" lands and bodies of the quilombolas. Of course, the land was already cultivated; it was simply done so by practices of reproduction that would be labeled as fugitive, or illicit, by anti-quilombo campaigns.

In sum: the fear that justified the destruction of Buraco do Tatú was a fear of what I term "the plantation, aquilombado." This formulation highlights the possibility of exposing what plantations had tried so hard to conceal: that the existence, formation, and reproduction of plantation slavery was by no means natural or given (a noun), but an artificial, imperializing performance made to seem as natural (a verb). While in its historical usage "aquilombado" highlights the constant possibility of the disordering of colonial landscaping from the inside, as an anti-colonial praxis it also renders visible the processes of creation that tied plantation labor to the wider black Atlantic. An Mbundu root, reformed as a Portuguese verb, and now situated – I hope jarringly – in an English-language paper, "aquilombado" attaches to prefigured colonial taxonomies (like "the plantation") and thus disrupts illusions of cultural continuity while etymologically tracing the fragmented and multidirectional processes of cultural formation sowed in the landscapes of the black Atlantic world. This move renders the quilombo not as a static African implantation into rural Brazil, but as a dynamic counter-colonial praxis nurtured in the indeterminate spaces between the plantation and the space of maroonage.

Landscaping the Visible: Plantations and the Dream of Colonial Visuality

Where, then, is "the plantation, aquilombado"? On one hand, its counter-colonial power lies precisely in its indeterminacy, its location at the ambiguous spaces where the logics of the imagined plantation and the quilombo cross. A dreamscape for the enslaved, it was a nightmare for the plantation system, articulated in the ever-present possibility of the overthrow and disorganization of the imperial plantation by the very instruments and categories constructed to serve it. My imagining of "the plantation, aquilombado" as an imagined landscape of counter-colonial praxis owes much to the work of Jill H. Casid, who in her *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization*, argued that slave revolts were, in a number of historical circumstances, inseparable from the idea of the destruction of the plantation regime.[64] In reading through Bryan Edwards' *An Historical Survey of the French Colony in the Island of St. Domingo* (1797), Casid traces how Edwards "reimagines slave revolt as a deformation and destruction of the plantation machine as an Edenic georgic garden of bountiful nature and artful labor."[65] But while the destruction of the colonial dreamscape performed by the Saint-Domingue revolt may have seemed like a nightmare, the opposite was true for the island's enslaved population:

> "From the vantage point of the ground of the colonial sugar plantation in Saint-Domingue and the perspective of the revolting slaves, imperial relandscaping, both as representation and material transformation, would have appeared, with its legacy of violent subjugation, more like a walking nightmare."[66]

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[64] Jill H. Casid, "Countercolonial Landscapes" in *Sowing Empire: Landscape and Colonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), 191-236. Manuel Barcia, though not making Casid's argument, also opens a path to this idea in the title of his work, *Seeds of Insurrection: Domination and Resistance on Western Cuban Plantations, 1808-1848* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2008).

[65] Ibid, 216. Casid is quoting from Bryan Edwards, *An Historical Survey of the French Colony in the Island of St. Domingo* (London: Stockdale, 1797).

[66] Casid, *Sowing Empire*, 237.

In tracing the nightmarish and dreamlike perspective possibilities for slaves and masters in the colonial landscape, Casid's turn of phrase is productive as we move forward, where the perceived slaves' nightmare "from the ground" seems to be held in opposition to the perspective from the air, from above, and thus, from the master and sovereign. As such, while I emphasize the dislocation and displacement afforded by aquilombar-as-praxis, I wish also to "ground" it by articulating the possible manifestations of "the plantation, aquilombado" through a second document, one sent to Mendonça Furtado in Lisbon and attached to the letter of Buraco do Tatú crimes: the *Planta do quilombo chamado Buraco do Tatu* . . . ("Plan of the Quilombo called Armadillo's Hole"; hereafter referred to as the "Buraco do Tatú map," Figure 1.3). A unique document in Brazilian history, Buraco do Tatú was one of only two quilombos of which a map was produced during the colonial period. It was, as the letter outlines, sent "to Your Excellency so that you may have some impression of the layout" of the now-vanquished rebellious landscape.[67] An impression that, I suggest, works to negotiate the counter-colonial practice of the quilombo by bringing this rebellious landscape back under the purview of colonial landscaping logic, while at the same time rendering visible, even conceding, the possibility of "the plantation, aquilombado": rendering both the dream and the nightmare, and the spaces in which they cross. This is, I suggest, even inherent to the production of the map itself. With all the energy and planning that went towards the destruction of this quilombo, at least one member of Cardoso's militia decided to spend time mapping it.

If the existence of quilombos continued to pose a nightmarish threat to the plantation regime through the robbing of all of its production, in the Buraco do Tatú map this nightmare is

[67] "Officio do Governo interino para Francisco X. de Mendonça Furtado . . ." *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional* 32 (1910): 44.

rendered clear and present through the artist's use of stark visual economy and legibility. Everything in the quilombo's visual field is rendered as two-dimensional. Two near-ubiquitous tropes of early modern cartography further accent the map's visual economy: at bottom, a detailed text legend guides the viewer through the names and descriptions of the corresponding location in the map; while the use of aerial perspective engenders a totalizing vision I term, following Nicholas Mirzoeff, as "oversight." This is, then, a counter-colonial space in which nothing is hidden from the Secretary's view. Seeing over the quilombo's walls, over the defenses, the map provides an unobstructed view over, past, and through what Cardoso's force had to blow up with grenades: the elevated walls and defenses of Buraco do Tatú, which in their material form shielded the quilombo both from outside weapons and outside vision. It is to this desire for the unimpeded, colonial view to which we now turn. If the Buraco do Tatú map travels back and forth between the colonial dream of the plantation and its ever-present possibility of internal destruction, we must first map what the dream of the colonial landscape entails, and how it was imagined, produced, and enforced in colonial visual culture.

Naturalizing Colonial Landscaping

"Colonial landscapes," writes David Bunn, "are often imagined to provide dramatic or romantic contexts for the individual explorer, but they are also frequently emptied of rival human presences."[68] Bunn's words situate the "colonial landscape" as a terrain of competing desires, where the dream of the unobstructed and artful colonial plantation works to constantly obscure the ever-present seeds of slave revolt. Just as the invasion and razing of Buraco do Tatú worked

[68] David Bunn, "'Our Wattled Cot': Mercantile and Domestic Space in Thomas Pringle's African Landscapes," in *Landscape and Power*, 2nd edition, ed. W.J.T. Mitchell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 132.

to literally "empty" the landscape of rival presences to the colonial plantation, the material practice and representation of the plantation needed to accomplish the same task in order to make the dream of the emptied colonial landscape a reality. This assertion dialogues with much recent landscaping theory, in order to situate landscaping as an imperial tactic. I use "landscaping" as opposed to "landscape," as this shift underscores one of the primary modes of the colonial imperial project of plantation agriculture and plantation slavery. While "landscape" is a noun – a static use that locks plantations into a concretized implantation or a primordial state, disconnected from the power relations of empire – "landscaping," in its stead, highlights the power relations and artifice inherent in the colonial project. As such, one of the main reasons quilombos faced such repression is that they too were landscaping practices; specifically, counter-landscaping practices that worked to render visible the way colonial landscaping sought to naturalize and aestheticize its existence and its "ordering," as I elaborate below.

W.J.T. Mitchell opens his 1994 edited volume *Landscape and Power* with a charge to shift "'landscape' from a noun to a verb," and therefore situate landscaping as an imperial and political tactic.[69] Mitchell defines landscape as "a process by which social and subjective identities are formed," which in turn "naturalizes a cultural and social construction, representing an artificial world as if it were simply given and inevitable."[70] In other words, landscape is a practice that continues to act on all aspects of cultural life, as opposed to an already-completed representation.[71] Thus, one of the primary ways that slavery empires legitimated and consolidated their legitimacy and authority was by figuring the exploitative labor of plantation economies seem not as landscaping (a gerund) but as a landscape, a noun.

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[69] Mitchell, "Introduction," in *Landscape and Power*, 1.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.

Yet in positioning landscape as an active politicizing process, Mitchell also asserts that "landscape," at least when defined as "a particular historical formation associated with European imperialism," is "an exhausted medium, no longer viable as a mode of artistic expression."[72] A prototypical Dutch landscape painting, Frans Post's *De Suikerfabriek en de plantage van Engenho Real* ("The Sugar Mill and the Plantation of the Royal Mill") of 1662, would seem to reinforce Mitchell's argument (Figure 1.4). One of the most prolific practitioners of the Dutch landscape painting genre, Post's works find their genesis in his activity in Dutch-occupied northeastern Brazil, known as New Holland, from 1636 to 1644. However, the majority of Post's works date not from his time in Brazil but after his return to the Netherlands following the ceding of Dutch-controlled Brazilian and African territories back to the Portuguese in 1654. As such, paintings like *De Suikerfabriek* were produced for a transatlantic Dutch audience whose Brazilian and African territories were now lost, and thus Post's landscapes worked to further an image not only of the Dutch plantation as an economic system, but as a memory of Dutch empire. In *De Suikerfabriek*, Post depicts, at right, an idealized *engenho real* ("Royal Mill"), a Portuguese term given to sugar plantations that housed both sugar mills and refining houses on site.

Yet, following Jill H. Casid in her critique of Mitchell's point, I insist that even the most prototypical objects of the European landscape genre derive their discursive power (what they *do* as landscaping practices) from an assertion that the landscapes of European imperialism will never be exhausted, nor will the means and modes of counter-landscaping that reimagine it. For Casid, the disconcerting ease with which Mitchell is able to dismiss the current viability of landscape as both a process and a practice is symptomatic of the lack of sex, gender, and queer

[72] Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape" in *Landscape and Power*, 5.

theorization in his field of vision: we should expect Mitchell's landscapes to no longer matter, as Judith Butler would argue, as bodies, objects, and practices that, utilizing a noun/verb pun, quite literally *matter*.[73] Thus, when examining what would seem to be an *image* of a landscape, which I am already positioning as a landscaping practice, an image is not a representation, nor is it a representation of a representation. Instead, it is a discursive act and ideological process whose power derives from its ability to self-naturalize, to act as a representation through a performance of naturalization. In this way, Post's imaging and imagining of the colonial engenho real reinforces Casid's emphasis on landscape not only as a productive (especially cultivating) process, but also potentially as an act of

> [N]egation, displacement, concealment, or disappearance, even of itself. That is, I want to insist on a deeply counter-intuitive understanding of landscaping as an act of erasure, evacuation, or abstraction . . . This anti-landscaping effect of landscape, or the absence of landscape presence, is where the histories of slavery, colonial bioprospecting, the construction of race in terms of an ostensibly visible typology, and the invention of photography cross.[74]

It is noteworthy, then, in thinking colonial landscaping through the history of plantation slavery, the ways in which the "histories of slavery" are negated and displaced through Post's landscapes. As Stuart Schwartz has noted, despite the proliferation of Dutch landscape paintings in this genre, no surviving image depicts the sugarcane fields that were instrumental to the engenho real.[75] This is, I argue, a strategic move: Post works to render visible the dream of the tranquil

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[73] Jill H. Casid, "Epilogue: Landscape in, around, and under the performative." *Women and Performance* 21:1 (March 2011): 98. Casid is citing Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993).
[74] Ibid, 111.
[75] Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society*, 108.

and pastoral plantation, where histories of exploited plantation labor, the environmental degradation of sugarcane production, and the transnational origins of sugar cultivation are rendered as artful Edenic labor, fully natural and local to colonial Brazil.

But while Post's engenho landscapes the visual world in order to sow the dreams of artful and peaceful slave labor in the Dutch colony, the material reality of engenhos, the plantation-as-engine, also worked to uproot and constantly reform the native Brazilian landscape. Bahian engenhos, for example, enforced a nine to ten-month harvest season called the *safra*, which Schwartz has characterized by

> "Kettles boiling above constant fires, shifts of slaves changing in the mill and the purging house . . . And behind it all, there was the constant whirring of the mill as it pressed from the cane the liquid that cost so much bitter sweat and that would crystallize into not only sweet sugar but wealth, prestige, and power as well."[76]

This "constant whirring of the mill," the repetition that produced sugar, slavery, and power on Brazilian engenhos, is what Post both chooses to highlight and integrate seamlessly and aesthetically into his dreamscape of empire. But this dream, this cyclical re-creation and reproduction of sanitized and sweetened aesthetic practice (again, as Césaire suggested, "the poem is not a mill for grinding sugar cane"), materially manifests as a constant degradation of the land. Keeping the sugar kettles boiling in the engenho required a near-constant supply of local firewood, while the constant cutting and harvesting and planting of sugar cane wore out the land quickly. This process depleted local forests and rendered land non-arable within decades, and so engenhos rarely survived more than forty years before relocating and beginning the process anew. Engenhos' destruction of the landscape and constant movement led historian

[76] Ibid, 99.

Manuel Moreno Fraginals, in stark contrast to the timelessness suggested in *De Suikerfabriek*, to label Cuban sugar mills as "nomad entities."[77]

This precariousness and displacement of engenho life necessitated high production rates generated through a combination of violent surveillance, excessive working hours, and deadly working conditions for enslaved laborers; or as Andrés de Gouvea wrote in 1627, "hell."[78] "Purgatory," may be a more apt term, though, as plantation owners also used a system of positive incentives, including small payments, promotions, and earned manumissions, to prevent runaway slaves and create the illusion of social mobility in the engenho. Still, quilombos and aquilombado Africans were a near-constant byproduct of the plantation engine, as the instability of quilombo life was an option for the enslaved that chose not to participate in the coercive, yet adaptable, plantation system.

It is this precarity that Post's colonial landscapes work to obscure by imaging, and imagining, the sugar plantation as a beneficial space of idyllic production. They do so, I contend, in order to prevent the practice of maroonage from the plantation as well the possibility of "the plantation, aquilombado." Thus, while occluding the violent labor of the cane fields and the environmental pollution required by sugar mills, Post situates the mill and its workers - imported African slave labor – as as inherent and natural to the Brazilian landscape as the living, growing botanicals that dominate the left half of his canvas. In one sense, this contrast works to analogize the engenho as naturally emerging from the land, as at home in Brazil as the native flora and fauna. Yet, Post's reluctance to depict sugarcane also obscures sugar's origin as a grafted transplant from India via New Guinea, only cultivated in the Americas in tandem with the rise of

[77] Manuel Moreno Fraginals, *The Sugarmill: The Socioeconomic Complex of Sugar in Cuba 1760-1860*, trans. Cedric Belfrage (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1976), 55.
[78] ANTT, Cartório dos Jesuitas, maço 68, n. 334. As quoted in Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations and the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550-1835* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 264.

the transatlantic slave trade. In this way *De Suikerfabriek* discursively and ideologically seeks to hide the evidence of its artifice by interpellating the colonial viewer in its taxonomies of the natural. In turn, it clears away evidence of the ways human exploitation, environmental degradation, and forced labor created this docile vision of the plantation regime.[79] This visual erasure of power dynamics, I argue, acts to define the plantation as what Casid productively terms an "anti-empire empire," in that "landscape and farm or, rather, specifically [the] plantation as a site of nature improved, as peaceful and productive cultivation or agriculture functioned, I argue, to reproduce empire as its opposite, an 'anti-empire.'"[80]

The organization of Dutch naturalist Willem Piso's 1648 treatise on the medicinal uses of Brazilian plants, *Medicina Brasiliae*, goes so far as to imagine sugar refinement *as* local flora and fauna, and thus figure the plantation regime as naturally at home in Brazil.[81] Part of *Historia naturalis Brasiliae*, a seminal text of Brazilian natural history co-authored by Piso and Georg Marcgraf, *Medicina Brasiliae*'s fourth book contains one hundred and four entries on native Brazilian botanicals, each one paired with an image representing the plant in question. One hundred and three of these contain flattened representative prints of each plant, such as the second entry, "De Mandhioca" ("Of Manioc," Figure 1.5). Yet the first entry in the series is neither a native Brazilian plant, nor does it contain an image of the plant in question. Instead, the entry "De Saccharo" ("Of Sugar") depicts the process of sugar production, in which a white overseer directs the stages of sugar refinement by black slaves (Figure 1.6). The intense heat and twenty-hour work days of the engenho are here positioned as both the proper botanical

[79] Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," in *Landscape and Power*, 14.
[80] Casid, *Sowing Empire*, 28.
[81] Willem Piso, *Medicina Brasiliensi* in Georg Marcgraf and Willem Piso, *Historia Naturalis Brasiliae* (Leiden. Batavorum, apud Franciscus Hackium et Amstelodami apud Lud. Elzevirium; Compiled by Joannes de Laet, 1648).

manifestation of sugarcane, as well as the use of most benefit to the book's readers. Placed at the beginning of Piso's treatise, sequencing sugar prior to the subsequent one hundred and three other entries works to idealize the sugar process as part of an idyllic Brazilian landscape, one full of plants with beneficial medicinal uses, as well as the happy, docile cooperation of slave labor in the production of wealth and power in the Atlantic.

Oversight and Ordering in the Naturalized Colonial Landscape

Building from the colonial landscaping practices rendered by Post and Piso, I move to argue that colonialism landscapes the visible. The production and reproduction of colonial power rested on the careful manipulation of certain definitions and constructs whose artifice was masked through descriptions of naturalness and inherency. With Casid having established the basis for conceiving of empire not only as a landscaping practice but as a technology that works to obscure its imperial designs, Nicholas Mirzoeff has moved to delineate the inner mechanisms of controlling and defining the colonized landscape, which I here summarize as "colonial visuality." Mirzoeff demonstrates that the proliferation of the plantation complex in the slave societies of the Americas depended on the invention of two categories: "the slave" and "the plantation."[82] These visible taxonomies of empire effectively delimited what definitions of bodies, reproduction, and landscape were permissible in the plantation context. Plantation overseers and colonial officials, then, applied these categories to the visible through the proliferation of visual imagery, and enforced these definitions through new world slave codes like the Barbados slave codes of 1661 and the French *Code Noir* of 1685.[83] In this context, the

[82] Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 51-52.

[83] The *Code Noir* ("Black Code") emerged from a 1685 edict by King Louis XIV that defined the conditions and policing of slavery throughout the French Empire, and especially in Saint-Domingue. It was published in various

main charge of the visual culture of slavery was the ordered enforcement of "the slave" and "the plantation" as natural concepts precisely because these concepts were artificial and the exposure of their artifice risked the disordering of the entire plantation regime. Colonial visuality, in this sense, was a landscaping practice and process. Its foundation rested on situating the colonial landscape and its structures of power as inherent and natural – a key which made the *process of landscaping* (the verb) seem to be a *landscape* (noun); and in turn as a natural, even timeless, aspect of the Americas. This process of defining visible colonial categories was enforced through what Mirzoeff terms the "ordering" of the landscape, here rendered as the separation and categorization of its aspects into distinct and manageable groupings like "the slave," and "the plantation," with "oversight" (the enforcement of surveillance and violence) as the discursive framework that policed these categories and their boundaries.

The Buraco do Tatú map encodes both ordering and oversight through its use of aerial perspective (oversight) and a guiding text legend (ordering). This dual presentation of aerial perspective and guiding text legend is a hallmark of the colonial nomination of the visible, surveyed and enforced through the unrestricted vision of the sovereign and his surrogate, the plantation overseer. French botanist Jean-Baptiste du Tertre operationalizes both these tropes in a representation of indigo cultivation in the French Caribbean, published in his *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François* ("General History of the Antilles Inhabited by the French," Paris, 1667; Figure 1.7).[84] At center, a white plantation overseer in fancy dress stands on a promontory, a seemingly natural elevation of landscape which concretizes his position as surveyor and enforcer of the very order codified through the legend. Though he stands with a

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other editions until the French Revolution in 1798. See, for example, *Le code noir ou Edit du roy* (Paris: Chez Claude Girard, dans la Grande'Salle, vis-à-vis la Grande'Chambre, 1735).

[84] Jean-Baptiste du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François*, 4 vols (Paris: Chez Thomas Iolly, 1667). Mirzoeff's analysis of du Tertre's print is in Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look*, 51-52.

lianne, a cane used to maintain order on the plantation by punishing enslaved workers, his elevated position ensures that his unaided vision is all that is needed to oversee and enforce the production process; as Mirzoeff notes, "it is his eyes that are doing the work."[85] Thus, Du Tertre positions the overseer as the literal embodiment of oversight, defined by Mirzoeff as "the regime of taxonomy, observation, and enforcement needed to sustain a visualized domain of the social and the political."[86]

It is my argument, however, that such images serve also to guide viewers through the colonial landscape in order to avoid rebellious counter-landscaping practices embedded within them. As such, while Mirzoeff positions the overseer as the central figure of power in this image, I forward an equally important role is played by the print's bottom register, where fourteen sequential descriptions correspond to fourteen sequential steps in the indigo production process, thus facilitating the ordering of indigo and the docile cooperation of slave labor. This sequencing acts as a marked pathway, both to control the movement and autonomy of enslaved laborers, while guiding viewers through the possibilities of revolt and maroonage that were already feared as inherent to colonial landscaping practices.

The utilization of a guiding text legend through colonial landscaping practices remained a near-ubiquitous aspect of plantation cartography throughout the Atlantic empires. In his *Narrative of a Five Years' Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* (1796), Dutch-British soldier John Stedman presents "Plan of a regular Coffee Plantation," an idealized view of a coffee plantation intended to prevent the slave revolts and maroon communities that characterized the eastern half of Dutch Guiana at the end of the eighteenth century (Figure 1.8).

[85] Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look*, 51.
[86] Ibid, 50.

"Intended to unite at once elegance, convenience, and safety," Stedman writes, the plan's perfect symmetry allows "everything at hand to be under the planter's own inspection."[87] A rectangular plot, separated from outside space by the plantation's moat and reinforced by the border of the plan itself, these demarcations naturalize the distinction between "cultivated and empty" space, and further entrench that division through the legend. This colonized space of the plantation – already figured as the antidote to slave rebellions – further works to identify and separate the naturalized taxonomies of colonial visuality under the unassuming label of a "regular" (and thus "regulated") coffee plantation. Stedman encodes this through a sequential list of forty labels which unite plantation production, docile slave labor, and oversight. With this plan as a guide, Stedman imagines the violently enforced cooperation of slave labor as inherent to the plantation's aesthetic beauty: "At the time of harvest," he writes, "it is not unpleasing to see the negroes picking the crimson berries among the polished green."[88] Stedman moves on to describe enslaved laborers "before the overseer's presence," where the "flogging commences . . . with impartial severity on all who have not fulfilled their tasks."[89] Thus, Stedman defines the regulation of the plantation through its production of docile African labor and oversight's particularly violent brand of surveillance. The overseer figure in Du Tertre's scene of indigo production disappears in Stedman's coffee plantation, as the aerial view and the taxonomy of the visible renders oversight as inherent to the colonized landscape.

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[87] John Stedman, *Narrative, of a five years' expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam, in Guiana on the Wild Coast of South America; from the year 1772, to 1777*, Vol. 2 (London: Printed for J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church Yard, & Th. Payne, Pall Mall: 1813), 367.

[88] Stedman, *Narrative, of a five years' expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam, Vol. 2,* 368.

[89] Ibid.

The Historical Praxis of Ordering and the Plantation, Aquilombado

So far, my goal has been to walk through the dream of the colonial plantation and the fear of its disordering as manifested in "the plantation, aquilombado," in both material and representational practice. The colonial "landscape" sought to recast the environmental degradation and hellish working conditions of plantation life as artful and natural labor. Slave flight and rebellion were constant threats to this vision, and so the material and representational manifestations of plantations utilized the violent surveillance of oversight, while also encoding a colonial taxonomy of the visible through the production of sequential text legends and the publication of slave codes throughout the Atlantic. In this way, the strategic recasting of the verb of colonial landscaping as the noun of colonial landscape sought to combat what I have termed as the fear of "the plantation, aquilombado," an active praxis which, in articulating the most feared counter-landscaping practice for the plantation regime, exposes the plantation for what it is: an "anti-empire empire." Buraco do Tatú's rebellion, then, lies in its exposure of the processes which sought to naturalize, and idealize, the agents of colonial visuality. To be blunt: the opposition I am working through is not the plantation vs. the quilombo; it is colonial visuality versus a rebellious counter-landscaping practice that makes visible the artifice of colonial visuality.

Returning to the Buraco do Tatú map: if ordering and oversight, as hallmarks of the mechanisms that construct colonial visuality, remained such powerful tools in historical documentation, how do the inheritances of those terms render themselves in current historical practice? While none of the previous analyses of the Buraco do Tatú map investigate its use of aerial perspective, all of them elaborate specifically on the ordering and regularity of the quilombo's central plaza in order to either speculate on the ethnic origins of the quilombo's

internal structure and landscaping practices, or to posit the quilombo's layout as emblematic of the superior and fearsome opposition Buraco do Tatú must have posed (Figure 1.9). In this way, current historiography of the Buraco do Tatú map has taken up the idea of ordering as a regular delineation of space in order to reposition it as constitutive of the quilombo's counter-colonial praxis. In other words, historians have found in the Buraco do Tatú map a way to claim the ordered regularity of plantation surveillance, like that produced in Stedman's coffee plantation, as marking the quilombo's formidable challenge to the plantation regime through the reproduction of plantation landscaping.

In her 1979 analysis of the Buraco do Tatú map, Lucinda Coutinho de Mello Coelho notes the precise ordering of Buraco do Tatú's main road or plaza: "[I]t constituted an important document that provides us with a thorough overview of the technique used by the Africans, distributing the villages in perfect symmetry."[90] Nine years prior, Stuart Schwartz saw in the Buraco do Tatú map a documentary source to shed light on the ethnic origins of the quilombolas and landscaping practices represented in the map. Schwartz notes how "The quilombo itself was a well-organized village laid out in a rectilineal pattern of six rows of houses divided by a large central street."[91] This "well-organized" central village, for Schwartz, along with other signs of ordering and regularity, potentially speaks to the quilombolas' adoption of non-African landscaping and living practices:

> "The monogamous marital pattern, the rectangular house shape, and the even rows of houses may be a reproduction of a plantation's slave quarters rather than any specific African pattern. Conversely the large central street equally dividing

[90] Lucinda Coutinho de Mello Coelho, "O quilombo 'buraco do tatu.'" *Mensário do Arquivo Nacional* 10:4 (April 1979): 6.
[91] Schwartz, "The 'Mocambo,'" 329.

> the houses of rectangular shape and the existence of what may have been a 'palaver' house in front of a plaza (H) are all elements of villages of northwestern Bantu groups such as the Koko, Teke, and Mabea. The documents give almost no indication of the origin of the runaways . . . The most reasonable conclusion is that no one African group lived in this mocambo."[92]

Note, then, Schwartz's double move. He forwards an idea that the slave quarters were imported, and thus quite literally fugitive, from plantations. At the same time, the ordering of the quilombo's interior plaza furthers an African-origin reading for not only the residents of Buraco do Tatú, but the kind of building and landscaping practices they used in constructing the quilombo. In other words, the "ordered" plaza testifies to the role of the quilombo as a space of African cultural retentions, while also positioning it as an inventive space of colonial opposition through its re-purposing of the plantation's structures. This point is furthered by João José Reis, who in 1996 argued that the map and its associated legend show a

> "[L]iving impression of an intelligently organized, efficient, well protected community of runaways, one dangerous for the slave-ocratic order. The military engineering, the symmetry of the houses, the production of food, the political leadership, the religious authority, the resistance to attack, testify to the presence of a superior enemy."[93]

In citing the "symmetry of the houses" and the "intelligently organized" layout of the quilombo, Reis, in addition to Schwartz and Mello, understand the Buraco do Tatú map not only as a documentary source, but one whose visual constitution provides a detectable pathway to the

[92] Schwartz, "The 'Mocambo,'" 329.
[93] João José Reis, "O mapa do buraco do tatu," in *Liberdade por um fio*, 504-505.

lived experiences of those inside. While the mathematical symmetry and "regular" organization of the quilombo's central village may seem clear and obvious, that clarity is a direct byproduct of the use of aerial perspective which, in turn, was designed to encode colonial oversight into and through this maroon community. At the same time, while the representation of Buraco do Tatú's central village as a series of symmetrical houses tells us potentially that aquilombado Africans nefariously re-produced the quilombo's seeming opposite in order to undermine the plantation regime, this organizational system in the map brings even the most intimate living spaces of the quilombo (as a counter-colonial landscaping practice) under the clear oversight of the militia and the officials who ordered and led its destruction.

In this way, in thinking through the quilombo as manifesting the possibility of "the plantation, aquilombado" and in forwarding "aquilombar" as an anti-colonial political praxis, I am seeking to map the stakes implicit in the political ramifications of the terms through which language and cartography are processed not only in colonial Brazil, but in current historical inquiry. If writing, as Deleuze and Guattari remind us, "has nothing to do with signifying, but with land-surveying and map-making, even of countries yet to come,"[94] then the Buraco do Tatú map is not only, as Reis argued, a map "of the world of the enemy, in this case, the vanquished."[95] Mapmaking, as an orchestration and performance of political relationships, surveys those landscapes and countries yet to come. In this case, the artist of the Buraco do Tatú mapped the quilombo while also mapping the political relationships between colonial landscaping practices and maroon communities, surveying the ambivalent and productive terrain at the intersection of colonial visuality and its counter-landscaping. What the artist of this map

[94] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "Rhizome," in *On the Line*, trans. John Johnston (New York: Semiotexte, 1983), 5.
[95] Reis, "O mapa do buraco do tatu," in *Liberdade por um fio*, 504.

draws, then, can be compared to what Irit Rogoff refers to as an "apparition," a visual trope whose jarring appearance serves "to shock us into recognition of the logical orders from within which we perceive the world, and which make it impossible to think of it in any other way."[96]

Though the name, identity, and biography of the artist of the Buraco do Tatú map has been lost, we can speculate that the "logical order" in which the artist of the Buraco do Tatú map trained included engineering, cartography, and mapmaking. For example, the Bahian-born military engineer José Antonio Caldas was one of the most prolific cartographers of the Portuguese Empire in the mid-eighteenth century, with a career that spanned four continents and included the first use of the *camera obscura* in Brazil. His 1757 aerial view map of the city of Santo António on the island of Príncipe (now part of São Tomé and Príncipe), *Planta iconografica da Cidade de Santo Antonio na Ilha do Principe* ("Iconographic plan of the City of Santo Antonio on the Island of Príncipe," Figure 1.10) is representative both of his career, and as a prototype for the many Portuguese-military maps of cities and fortresses produced throughout the Portuguese world at this time. We can note here, once again, the use of aerial perspective and sequential ordering text legend as representative in Portuguese military mapmaking. Moreover, in 1763, the year of Buraco do Tatú's destruction, the Marquis of Pombal began a major reorganization of the Portuguese army fitting for a modern nation-state, one in which engineering, cartography, and war technology were posed as unified disciplines.[97] In that year the Italian-born Carlos Julião joined the Portuguese Royal Artillery Regiment and took up study as an engineer-soldier, and today his aerial-perspective and ground-view maps of Portuguese fortresses survive alongside his detailed panorama landscape studies of locales throughout the

[96] Irit Rogoff, *Terra Infirma: Geography's Visual Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 91.
[97] Maria Manuela Tenreiro, "Military Encounters in the Eighteenth Century: Carlos Julião and Racial Representations in the Portuguese Empire." *Portuguese Studies* 23:1 (2007): 9.

Portuguese world.[98] Thus it is possible, if not likely, that the artist of the Buraco do Tatú map had training in the Portuguese rules of cartography, and that the production of the Buraco do Tatú map was part of this new focus on engineering-cartography in the Marquis do Pombal's military establishment.

Though the quilombo was razed and destroyed, Buraco do Tatú serves to shock, I argue, Cardoso's militia into recognition of this logical order. As such, the map then works to negotiate the seeming conflict between the artist's training and background, and the apparent disordering of the very order his cartographic training would have emphasized. But, in also providing "some impression of the layout" of the quilombo to Mendonça Furtado, the map's artist also understands mapmaking as a coordination of colonial political power, one where he – as cartographer and militia member – is meant to provide facile entry to the Secretary in Lisbon. Ironically, it is precisely this facile entry, this pathway of guidance, that was denied to Cardoso's militia, as they had to literally explode Buraco do Tatú's walls with grenades and guns. But if oversight and the utilization of an ordered text legend are meant to be guiding gestures, pathways through the very landscaping practices that threatened to dis-order the plantation regime, how are historians to enter the quilombo? Mello, Schwartz, and Reis have all attempted this, and I do the same. But the question remains" how do we orient our own research practices through the pathways provided in this map, and in so doing open the future possibilities of "the plantation,

[98] Julião's panoramic landscapes of Bahia and the global Portuguese empire are discussed in the introduction and conclusion of this thesis. For further studies on Julião's panoramas in relation to Portuguese racial ideologies and military cartography, see Tenreiro, "Military Encounters in the Eighteenth Century." See an elaboration of Tenreiro's ideas in Tenreiro, *Military Encounters in the 18th Century: Racial Representations in the work of Carlos Julião and Colonial Discourse in the Portuguese Empire* (Ph.D. diss., School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 2008). On Julião's work see also Silvia Hunold Lara, "Customs and Costumes: Carlos Julião and the Image of Black Slaves in Late Eighteenth-Century Brazil." *Slavery and Abolition* 23:2 (2002): 123-146; and Valéria Piccoli Gabriel da Silva, *Figurinhas brancos e negros: Carlos Julião e o mundo colonial português* (Ph.D. diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2010).

aquilombado" as an anti-colonial praxis?

Buraco do Tatú and the Cartographies of Counter-Colonial Praxis

We can now return to the Buraco do Tatú map. I have already outlined a series of factors which would seem to attempt to once again counter-landscape Buraco do Tatú to negate the rebellious possibilities it posed, and to bring the quilombo back inside the ordered taxonomies I outlined under the heading of "colonial visuality." The recitation of the quilombo's crimes posed it as counter to the plantation economy, while the complete razing of the quilombo's grounds effectively wiped it from the land, thus materially manifesting, at least for a moment, the dream of the unobstructed colonial plantation. For this reason, the choice to create the map would seem to run counter to such desires, unless the goal was to bring the quilombo and its counter-colonial praxis back under the set of controlling mechanisms I define as colonial oversight. In the map, I have traced these as the use of aerial perspective as constitutive of sovereign oversight, and the ordering of the quilombo's contents through the reproduction of a guiding text legend at the map's bottom register.

However, a central part of my argument throughout this project is that attempts to obscure the dangerous or unappealing practices of colonialism do so in order to prevent what is already and always there: counter-practices that threaten to disorder to the dream of the artful plantation from the inside. As such, I want to seize on a point noted by historian João José Reis in his speculative analysis of the Buraco do Tatú map. Against a near-ubiquitous trope in plantation cartography utilizing a text legend that guides the viewer through the map's contents by using sequential numbers or letters, Reis notes that "a curious feature of this legend" of the Buraco do Tatú map, "is that the letters that guide the reader through the map do not correspond

to alphabetical order..."[99] At the risk of over-emphasizing this point: in the first, and to that point only, map of a Brazilian quilombo – an active praxis whose rebelliousness lies in its *disordering* of the mechanisms of colonial visuality – the guiding text legend that had previously delineated the precise terms of the ordering of the colonial plantation is, here, completely disordered. Below I show the transcribed Portuguese text of the legend prior to providing its translation because I argue that *how* the legend names the map's contents is just as important as *what* it names.

> Planta do Quilombo chamado o Buracu do Tatu p.a a Costa do Itapoam q' a 2 de 7br. de 1763 foy atacado p.Lo Capp.m mor da Conquista do Gentio barbaro Joaquim da Costa Cardozo. Aletra **A** Entrada falsa coberta de estrepes q' mostrava a entrada, a Letra **D** Fojos Cobertos, e dentro estrepes, **C** pinguelas // Levadisas por onde se serviaõ e denoite as tiravaõ, **N** Caza do Porteyro q' tinha as pinguelas a seu Cargo, **E** fonte, **T** Hua preta q' Lavava, e gritando se matou a espingarda, **P** Hum preto q' huã granada lhe quebro as pernas, e se matou, **G** O preto q' chegou a dar hum tiro, e foy morto, **R** Huã preta velhissima q' se matou, que // diziaõ era feyticeyra, **Z** acaza do Capp.m, **B** as cazas do Arrayal do chamado seu Povo, **L** trinxeyra estrepada com varias estrepes, os mayores chagaraõ a os peytos de q.L q.r homem, e hiaõ diminuindo athé ficar em menos de palmo, **Q** a latada de maracujá, **F** as Ortas, **I** obregio q' sercava o Quilombo com tal atoleyro, // q' Sumergia hu' homem, **O** a pinguela por onde se pasava p.a o Quilombo pequeno, **S** Quilombo pequeno, **X** as Cazas, **V** estreparias, **M** pinguela por onde se serviaõ p.a a parte do mar. Este nome pinguela he o mesmo q' hu' barrote por sima do q.L pasavaõ o brejo, e os fojos, sendo estes huns buracus

[99] Reis, "O mapa do buraco do tatu," in *Liberdade por um fio*, 504.

Largos // da altura de sinco palmos guarnecidos por dentro de paos de pontas.

Proceeding in an uninterrupted sentence as opposed to a list, this legend moves away from the nearly-ubiquitous trope of alphabetical progression we have seen thus far. A. D. C. N. E. T. P. G. R. Z. B. L. Q. F. I. O. S. X. V. M. This legend's disavowal of alphabetical progression upends expectations of easy guidance through the map, and thus through the quilombo. Further disorienting this expectation is an occasional lack of correspondence between the map and its legend. For example, an open-air plaza at center right, labeled H, – ironically the kind of space intended to be open to the sky and its surveyors – is actually not mentioned in the legend at all (see Figure 1.9). Meanwhile, both the legend and the map leave out the letters J, U, and Y, which should appear in the legend if the map's designer had proceeded in alphabetical sequence.

The designer of this map could have arranged the letters of the legend in alphabetical order and labeled the map correspondingly, and likely would have been trained to do so if we assume, as is likely, that the background for the Buraco do Tatú mapmaker included training in Portuguese military cartography. As such, the lack of alphabetical progression through the text legend, combined with an occasional lack of correspondence between the legend and the items it labels in the map, suggest a key point in my analysis: the letters were intentionally placed on the map first, and the legend was then constructed to experiment with a newly-recognized set of potential image-text correspondences. This performance – and I use this word in specific contrast to "legend" – opens up alternate pathway of guidance through this quilombo, and through this counter-colonial landscaping practice, one distinctly at odds with the established colonial defining of the visible. Perhaps, then, this intentional erasure, disordering, and reorganization opens up alternate labels and taxonomies that functioned outside of the imagination of Mendonça Furtado and the other officials in Lisbon for whom this map was intended. That is, perhaps the

letters in this map do not so much label its contents as they grapple and dance with each other, exploring alternate definitions and pathways that could not, or cannot, be contained in the legend. One of these performances, I suggest, is an articulation of precisely the counter-colonial landscaping possibilities already inherent to the colonial plantation, the imagining of that which would render visible the artifice of colonial landscape naturalization and expose it as an "anti-empire empire." In other words, perhaps the Buraco do Tatú map makes visible "the plantation, aquilombado."

. . .

The translation of the Buraco do Tatú map legend proceeds as follows:

> Plan of the Quilombo called the Armadillo's Hole on the Coast of Itapuã that on the 2nd of September of 1763 was attacked by the Captain Major of the Conquest Gentio Bárbaro Joaquim da Costa Cardozo. The letter **A** False entrance covered in caltrops (barbed wire traps) that showed the entrance, the Letter **D** Covered pitfalls, and within caltrops, **C** drawbridges (*pinguelas*) through which the portcullis is accessed, and at night are raised, **N** House of the Guard who had the bridges in his charge, **E** Fountain, **T** a black woman who was washing, and shouting was killed by a rifle, **P** a black man, a grenade broke his legs, and he was killed, **G** the black man who arrived and gave a shot, and died, **R** an old black woman who killed herself, who said she was a sorceress (*feiticeira*), **Z** the house of the Captain Major, **B** the houses of the Village of its called People, **L** caltrop trench with various caltrops, the largest reached the chest of any man, and the smallest were less than a palm, **Q** the passion fruit trellis, **F** the Gardens (*hortas*), **I** the swamp that surrounded the Quilombo with such quagmire, that it submerged

> a man, **O** the bridge by where one passed to the small Quilombo, **S** small quilombo, **X** the houses, **V** caltropped, **M** bridge by where is served a part of the sea. This name *pinguela* is the same as a *barrote* (beam) which passed over the marsh, and pitfalls, and these are large holes of height five palms trimmed inside with pointed sticks.

On one hand, this legend recounts the invasion of the quilombo from the perspective of Cardoso's militia. At the same time, the text plays with chronology, temporality, and the fixity of bodies and landscaping practices, re-sequencing established tropes in what I prefer to think of as a narrative performance as opposed to a static legend. Beginning, expectedly, with A, the typical road to guide the viewer through the quilombo's counter-colonial quagmire and immediately closes off: the road is "a false entrance," and the reader needs to find another way (Figure 1.11). Just as Cardoso's presumed entry point was a trap – sharpened spikes obscured by grasses, made to appear natural – so too does the narration fail to provide facile entry into the logics of the quilombo map's taxonomy. Not only is entry denied, the narration labels it "false." Against this barrier, the narration provides, or suggests, other modes of entry, and by extension, other modes of classifying the visible.

From there, further defenses block access to Buraco do Tatú. At top center, a green, pastoral landscape of trees and bushes so clearly rendered outside the quilombo's walls contrast jarringly with the sandy, desert-beige of its interior, where the authorized production of the plantation economy should not thrive. The dangers to entry here are many: caltrops, pits filled with sharpened stakes. An unseen watchman provides the only entry, manipulating the drawbridges like an overseer who, like his plantation counterpart, controls the reader's movement into this rebellious counter-landscape. Past the border, two-dimensional trees stand

amidst sharpened spikes, visually suggesting unspoken alliances between the quilombo's defenses and the native landscape.

Once these entrances prove impassable, the narration quickly switches to the bottom half of the map (Figure 1.12). Labeled E, *fonte* means both "fountain" and "source," providing an entrance from which one can finally begin to fight through the quilombo's defenses and fugitive taxonomies. Arrows drawn on the roads mark the path taken by Cardoso's troops, where the first and only casualties of the battle are rendered as ghostly presences. Evoking cadaver outlines – faceless, two-dimensional, and flat – four human figures actively narrate the map's chronological progression while marking its destruction. A woman, washing her clothes, labeled T at bottom left, first noticed the invaders and was shot; hearing her, a man (P) at far left came running with a bow and arrow, and was killed by a grenade. Whereas at the top of the map the quilombo's defenses were figured as static spikes whose agency was only partially alluded to by the visual contrast of the trees, here outlined bodies in the sand mark the quilombola casualties at the spots where they died.

Emerging through the central plaza and the maze of houses, Cardoso's men encountered two others: a man (G) came running with a gun and was shot and killed, and finally a woman (R; see Figure 1.9). Unlike the others, whose weapons of defense are drawn next to their outlined bodies, her defense was the unseen: she shouted that she was a *feiticeira* ("sorcerer"), a generic term for a practitioner of Afro-Atlantic religion and magic, which itself was a frequent subject of Portuguese inquisition trials through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But as Roger Sansi has noted, while accusations of sorcery are very common, self-definitions of the practice

are almost unheard of.[100] By accusing someone of *feiticaria* ("sorcery"), "the accused can acquire a power over the accuser, the hidden power of the sorcerer."[101] While previously I noted the visual-textual symbolism of the armadillo in reference to plantation disruption, the feiticeira's marking of the space of Buraco do Tatú with a weapon of sorcery also functions through the quilombo's name. Tatupebas, the name given to six-banded or yellow armadillos, were known by enslaved central Africans as *papa-defuntos*, or "dead-eaters." [102] Tatupebas were frequently cited for their frequent uncovering, and then consumption, of buried corpses – a practice Robert W. Slenes links potentially to the image of the *ndoki*, a powerful spirit who ingests human corpses.[103]

But the logic of this self-accusation throws the juridical order of sorcery accusations on its head. With acknowledgement of this weapon before Cardoso's men, the unnamed *feiticeira* was killed. Perhaps she intended the announcement of her powers to mark the quilombo's defense even after her death, and so the uncanny presence of these four bodies in the quilombo serves to counteract, still, the razing and destruction of the quilombo. I will return to this complex relationship between the representation of human bodies, the practice of sorcery, rebellious aesthetics, and the protection of inhabited space in chapter three. But with the quilombo now, following Bunn's words, emptied of living rival human presences, the quick pace and action of the narration of the performance-narration seems to cease: at bottom center, it records a garden, houses, a trellis for growing passionfruit, and finally, further defenses and a pathway out of this landscape, out to the sea.

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[100] Roger Sansi, "Sorcery and Fetishism in the Modern Atlantic," in *Sorcery in the Black Atlantic*, ed. Luis Nicolau Parés and Roger Sansi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 22.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Slenes, "'I Come from Afar, I Come Digging,'" in *Cangoma Calling*, 74.
[103] Ibid.

I suggest that these quick narrative shifts – from the impassability of the quilombo's defenses, to the action of battle against these four quilombolas, to the seemingly static recording of the gardens and agricultural plots – all belie a further visual play that exposes one of the deep ambivalences at the heart of the Bahian plantocracy: the potentially rebellious presence of slaves' subsistence gardens as a necessary part of sugar plantations. While I have been examining the idea of "the plantation, aquilombado" as an alternately dreamlike and nightmarish space that works to disorder the logic of the plantation from the inside, Brazilian sugar plantations in the second half of the eighteenth century, and especially into the early nineteenth, often contained gardens for slave subsistence (called *roças*, to return to this word mentioned in Mendonça Furtado's letter), gardens which are alternately imagined both in the colonial period and in current scholarship as spaces of oppression, negotiation, and rebellion. As such, these gardens confounded the visual order of the plantation economy. They speak to the praxis that works to expose the artifice of colonial visuality from the inside, as their existence was sanctioned, even promoted, through the enforced taxonomy of both the "the slave" and "the plantation." But the subsistence garden in Buraco do Tatú provides a further layer of complexity and confounding, as it is marked in the map with an "F," a letter that works to render visible the alternate and unregulated practices of reproduction that work to disorder and reimagine the plantation regime.

The Fugitive Slave Garden and "the Plantation, Aquilombado"

An imperial edict of March 3, 1741, established the protocol for the forced branding of the fugitive slave body:

I, the king, make known that this charter come in the form of law, that having

> been presented to me the insults committed by fugitive slaves in Brazil, commonly called *calhambolas* [another word for quilombola], having done the indulgence of joining quilombos; and being necessary to respond with remedies, to prevent this disorder: and for well, that all blacks, which are found in quilombos, being with them voluntarily, put on them with fire a mark on a shoulder with the letter "F," so that there will be this effect in the Councils; and when is this punishment is executed on one, is found to have the same brand, one will cut off an ear, all by a simple authorization of the *juiz-de-fora* . . . or the District Ombudsman, without any process and only by notoriety of fact, as soon as the quilombolas are brought, before going to jail."[104]

Complying with this decree, after their capture thirty-nine of the Buraco do Tatú quilombolas were forcibly branded with the letter F for *fugido* ("fugitive"). Had they lived, this same letter would have also been branded on the four people whose bodies still inhabit the Buraco do Tatu map. Thus, the intentional labeling of objects and bodies with letters indicating their status as fugitive, was, at the time of the invasion of Buraco do Tatu, an established aspect of Portuguese slave law. And in the Buraco do Tatú map, what did the artist mark with an "F"? *As hortas*, the gardens. In choosing the word "gardens" as opposed to *roças* ("subsistence plots"), and in labeling these gardens with an "F," as fugitive, the Buraco do Tatú maps seeks to think through what I explore as the fugitive slave garden, a physical space that rendered visible the possibility of "the plantation, aquilombado," and was allowed and sanctioned on plantations precisely to provide space for the disordering threat inherently cultivated by colonial landscaping practices.

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[104] Alda Maria Palhares Campolina, *Cadernos de Arquivo 1: Escravidão em Minas Gerais* (Belo Horizonte: Arquivo Público Mineiro, 1988), 104-105. A "juiz de fora," literally an "outside judge" is a colonial Portuguese magistrate brought to a municipality when the input of an outside, impartial, and unbiased judge was necessary.

In current historiography of the Buraco do Tatú map there is continued disagreement on what, exactly, *horta* means in this context. Indeed, at the end of the eighteenth century, Lisbon reimagined its metropole as the product of foreign agriculture and productivity: the Governors of Bahia were obligated to send plant samples from Bahia back to Lisbon, for the "utility of the public resulting from the establishment of a botanic garden (*horto botanico*) in the capital, as established by royal orders of May 28, 1799 and March 3, 1800."[105] The plants of Bahia were thus seen as instrumental to the production of the imperial subject. It is in this sense that *horta* is most typically used, to refer to a cultivated area for public consumption associated with upper class stature. Indicating that the Buraco do Tatú had hortas refigures this quilombo as, strangely, a metropole. However, Stuart Schwartz believes hortas refers potentially to the "dawn gardens" of the Kingdom of the Kongo, noting that in Buraco do Tatú this plot was likely dedicated to small herbs as opposed to staple crops, and using that analysis to point to a potentially African origin for this landscaping practice: an Africanizing of the metropole's gardening, now in flux between Lisbon, Bahia, and Congo.[106]

In combating the quilombo through the proliferation of Edenic reproduction, colonial officials likely sought to obscure – or at least, forget – how such alternative and unsupervised models were birthed, and replicated, inside the plantation. In his *O Fazendeiro do Brazil* ("The Farmer of Brazil," published between 1798 and 1806), Brazilian botanist José Mariano da Conceição Veloso argued that granting slaves permission to cultivate their own subsistence gardens inside plantations actually improved production and stability.[107] Veloso proposed a number of schematic improvements, particularly the structure of plantations. In 1799, Veloso

[105] Ignacio Accioli de Cerqueira e Silva, *Memorias Historicas, e Politicas de Provincia da Bahia*, Vol. 1 (Salvador: Typ. do Correio Mercantil de Précourt, 1835), 267-271.
[106] Schwartz, "The 'Mocambo,'" 331.
[107] José Mariano da Conceição Veloso, *O Fazendeiro do Brazil* (Lisbon: Simão Thaddeo Ferreira, 1799-1806).

published an the plan of an ideal sugar plantation, "Fazenda de Mr. A em S. Domingos, de duzentos, e vinte cinco quadrados" ("Plantation of Mr. A in Saint Domingo, of two hundred and twenty five square," Figure 1.13) adapted from the work of Pierre-Joseph Laborie, a British coffee planter living in Saint Domingo (Haiti) during the small period of British occupation of the south and western provinces.[108] In 1798, at the end of the British occupation, Laborie published his *The Coffee Planter of Saint Domingo* for the benefit of his countrymen working in Jamaica.[109] As we have seen visualized by du Tertre and described further by Stedman, the encoding of oversight is necessary to the production of the plantation's artful labor: "The people employed in the work of lifting and picking are usually the most slothful and inattentive, and require constant watching."[110] And also as we have seen before, for Laborie, this oversight was assisted, even concretized, through the same process of constructing ordering and regularity: "It is needless to say that regularity and symmetry, as much as the place will permit of, are pleasing and convenient, in this as in every thing else, and ought therefore not to be overlooked."[111] Such symmetry, in addition to maintaining the social order, constructed a regularity of space that rendered visible the surveillance required to keep slaves in check.

Overall, in theorizing this coffee estate, Laborie envisioned a plantation that possessed "a symmetrical regular arrangement of the building place, savannas or pastures, provision grounds for the master and the negroes, grass grounds, and fields of coffee trees."[112] Note, however, Laborie's inclusion of "provision grounds for . . . the negroes." Adapting Laborie's image for use in Brazil, Veloso reserved a large section lower-left of center – labeled "F" – as "land for blacks"

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[108] The image discussed here is from Veloso, *O Fazendeiro do Brazil*, Vol. 2.
[109] P.J. Laborie, *The Coffee Planter of Saint Domingo* (London: Printed for T. Cadell & W. Davies, 1798).
[110] Ibid, 97.
[111] Ibid, 39.
[112] Ibid, 6.

for their subsistence gardens. Still utilizing the colonial tropes of an aerial perspective and an alphanumerical legend, Veloso presents these gardens as necessary and regulated aspects of the imagined plantation. At the same time, Veloso visually suggests that slaves be granted a measure of landscaping autonomy over these spaces; or, more provocatively, that increasing plantation production necessitates allowing for potentially African models of agriculture. Veloso depicts the slave gardens' internal organization as guided by a series of small, irregular plots dotted with small trees and cris-crossed with competing diagonal and horizontal rows. Yet the geometric imperfections of the slave gardens disappear inside Veloso's rendering of the coffee plantings at far left. Veloso so insists on the perfect symmetry and ordering of the coffee trees that those trees at the area's far right border are actually cut in half by the slave gardens so as to maintain the coffee planting's symmetrical rows (Figure 1.14). In this way, Veloso asks plantation owners to allow slave subsistence gardens to visually dis-order of the plantation from the inside – a concession that explicitly links slave gardens to quilombos.

Far from a knee-jerk response to slave flight and rebellion, granting personal subsistence land to enslaved laborers was a common feature of plantations throughout the Americas. In Bahia, an extensive network of slave subsistence gardens produced surplus crops, then sold by the gardens' owners in markets throughout the region, particularly in Salvador. While roças may have been allowed in order to reduce food costs for plantation owners, they also provided an articulated space for the cultivation of alternate forms of landscape production and reproduction, with potentially rebellious possibilities. Overall, analyses of slave gardens have tended to diminish the exploitative relationship that such gardens entailed: their owners were in many ways thoroughly locked in the plantation system. As plantation slaves already wanted for food, the gardens provided some nourishment as well as an additional burden to an already excessive

work schedule.[113] Thus, slave gardens are linked both to the cultivation of alternative landscaping practices, as well as the hellish exploitation of slave labor that fostered the formation of quilombos.

Bahia did have an extensive network of slave gardens whose excess produce was sold in markets throughout the region.[114] However, this system was considerably less developed than in the Caribbean, especially through the first half of the nineteenth century, and slaves rarely gained large amounts of subsistence from their gardens, and also infrequently sold their goods at market.[115] Roças provided slaves with independent space for economic and landscaping pursuits, as potential counter-colonial landscapes. B.J. Barickman has outlined the potential scholarly debates in reference to roças in Bahia: while such gardens can be understood as potentially independent spaces of self-articulation that provide control over an independent slave-controlled economy (while, however, reducing costs for the plantation owners), at the same time, analyses of slave gardens have tended to diminish the exploitative relationship that such gardens entailed, thoroughly locked in the system, and potentially providing an additional burden to the slaves who were in many ways forced to cultivate them.[116] While roças may have been allowed in order to reduce food costs for plantation owners, they also provided an articulated space for the cultivation of alternate forms of landscape production and reproduction, with potentially rebellious possibilities. Jill Casid has most strongly made this point in references to the slave

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[113] B.J. Barickman, "'A Bit of Land, Which They Call Roça': Slave Provision Grounds in the Bahian Recôncavo, 1760-1840." *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 74:4 (November 1994): 650-652.

[114] João José Reis and Beatriz Gallotti Mamigonian, "Nagos: The Yorubas of Bahia" in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 87.

[115] For the most thorough discussion of the history, distribution, and economics of Bahian slave subsistence gardens see Barickman, "'A Bit of Land, Which They Call Roça,'" 649-687.

[116] Barickman, "'A Bit of Land, Which They Call Roça,'" 650-652; James H. Sweet, *Domingos Álvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 47.

subsistence gardens of the Caribbean, analyzing them as a system of counter-colonial landscaping.[117] Potentially grafting African systems of ordering landscape onto the imperial landscaping practices emerging from the European metropole, slave gardens inherently "threatened the plantation machine from within its own structuring system by its alien likeness."[118] As such, the cultivation of provisional slave grounds provided slaves with a measure of autonomy in their daily lives.[119] But the amount of autonomy, and subsistence, slaves were able to derive from their gardens varied widely throughout the Americas. As B. J. Barickman notes, slaves in Grenada, Martinique, French Guyana, and Jamaica drew most of their subsistence from slave gardens, even producing surpluses sold at large slave markets; while slaves in Barbados, Antigua, and the United States depended largely on distributed rations.[120] Markets in Jamaica, Saint-Domingue, Antigua, Grenada, Martinique, and Barbados all had hundreds, if not thousands, of slaves.[121]

Yet both of these formations of the slave garden obscure what Stuart Schwartz has argued, that reserving a plot of land for slave gardens was part of the agricultural production of sugarcane in Bahia. Plantation owners would delimit sections of land to be planted with vegetables by enslaved laborers; this process "softened" the soil for a season, and the next season the garden was uprooted and planted with sugarcane, which now benefited from improved soil quality.[122] As such, slave gardens came with a trade-off: they saved money for plantation owners and improved the soil quality, but their existence, in some sense, provided a measure of

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[117] Casid, *Sowing Empire*, 198-212.
[118] Ibid, 212.
[119] B.J. Barickman, *A Bahian Counterpoint: Sugar, Tobacco, Cassava, and Slavery in the Recôncavo, 1780-1860* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 57.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid, 63.
[122] Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society*, 108.

autonomy and self-control in slaves' daily lives. It is thus here, at the center of the plantation, that aquilombado praxis emerges: both by grafting African systems of landscape ordering onto the colonial plantation, as well as allowing enslaved Africans to independently reproduce European systems of ordering. The rebellious counter-landscaping enacted by the fugitive slave garden then, was a reconceptualization of the kinds of Edenic reproduction taking place inside plantations already. Most directly, slave gardens enacted the possibility of landscaping outside the purview of the plantation overseer; which, until this point, had been unthinkable inside the ordering structures of colonial visuality.

Some nineteenth-century Brazilian plantation manuals sought to prevent slave rebellion through the independent cultivation of *roças*. In his 1834 *Ensaio sobre o fabrico oe assucar* ("Essay on the Manufacture of Sugar"), Miguel Calmon du Pin e Almeida lambasts against the cruel iron "F" branding as punishments for fugitive slaves.[123] Seeking to prevent the loss of labor from plantations, he makes a series of recommendations for the "good treatment of slaves:"

> "It is very desirable that the Master gives or enables the slave to have some property, and encourages his industry. This is a powerful way of distracting him from notions that are the inseparable from his sad condition, and of inspiring in him the desire to work, and inviting him to make a family. The practice of encouraging him to plant a roça, especially with subsistence crops, of allowing him to have some cattle, or exercise some industry; this without a doubt is conducive to his possible happiness, because it can modify the disorderly propensities that slavery generates and fosters."[124]

[123] Miguel Calmon du Pin e Almeida, *Ensaio sobre o fabrico do assucar* (Salvador: Na Typographia do Diario, 1834), 64-65. Republished in facsimile as Miguel Calmon du Pin e Almeida, *Ensaio sobre o fabrico do açúcar* (Salvador: Sistema FIEB, 2002).
[124] Almeida, *Ensaio sobre o fabrico do assucar*, 60.

Thus, for Almeida, allowing increasingly independent authority over a subsistence plot led to the formation of a "family," and thus was a key way to prevent "disorderly propensities" – code-words for both quilombos and the violent slave insurrections that characterized Bahia throughout the first decades of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, at the time of Almeida's writing, estate appraisers in Bahia often recorded, in great detail, the boundaries and contents of plantation grounds; but rarely, if ever, the roças, thus implying that the slaves were understood to "own" these plots of land.[125]

What interests me here, however, is that the production and cultivation of subsistence gardens for slaves was not limited to enslaved men and women on plantations. Fugitive or self-emancipated slaves in quilombos and mocambos in the Bahian Recôncavo also cultivated gardens inside the quilombos. In other cases, quilombolas formed groups to collectively negotiate subsistence relationships with established plantations. At least one known slave rebellion was fueled by debates over the extent to which slaves "owned" these gardens, and thus had the right to oversee and reproduce them as they wish. At the Engenho de Santana in Bahia, a group of slaves revolted against the plantation overseers in 1789. They returned with a peace treaty which, among other demands, asked for more time to devote to their subsistence gardens, greater freedom in choosing what land they were allowed to cultivate, increasing the number of days they had to work at their gardens from one to three, and the construction of a boat large enough to take them all to Salvador to sell their crops.[126] None of these demands were enough to dissuade the plantation owner from signing the treaty. Instead, the unthinkable demand was the request to allow enslaved laborers to choose their own overseers, and to grant them ownership of

[125] Barickman, *A Bahian Counterpoint*, 58
[126] Ibid, 60

the engenho's production equipment. Thus, for these revolting slaves, increasing autonomy of subsistence plots inside plantations led directly to demands to destroy, or at least control, the oversight of colonial visuality.

Thus, this clear marking of Buraco do Tatu's subsistence gardens with the branding reserved for fugitive slaves exposes the ambivalences that rebel against the enforced taxonomies of colonial visuality from the inside. While marking "the gardens" as fugitive chastises them for daring to exist outside colonial oversight; this mark also renders visible the rebellious landscapes sanctioned by masters and overseers inside plantations already, spaces that potentially cultivated alternate practices of reproduction that threatened to disorder the plantation. As shown by the revolting slaves on Engenho de Santana, slave gardens embedded and cultivated the potential of "the plantation, aquilombado," and thus the real possibility not only of slave rebellion, but of a disordering of the plantation regime from the inside. But this was never rendered visible on any plantation map. The exposure of this dangerous ambivalence, of the potential rebellion which was cultivated and sanctioned by colonial oversight, is reserved not for maps of plantations, but of the quilombo of Buraco do Tatú.

Conclusion

On July 12, 1754, José Rolim, a resident of the Comarca of São José de El Rey and owner of a plantation in the district of Capella da Santa Rita in the captaincy of Minas Gerais, requested permission to establish a sugarcane engenho on his plantation, which he had named "Quilombo."[127] Throughout the eighteenth century, the hilly mining country of Minas Gerais was

[127] AHU, Minas Gerais, Papeis avulsos, doc. 5438: "Requerimento de Jose Rolim, pedindo autorizacao para construir um engenho de cana na sua fazenda chamada Quilombo, sita no distrito da Capela de Santa Rita . . ."

characterized by the proliferation of small predatory quilombos located manageable distances away from villages and urban centers and farmlands.[128] Some of these, like the large complex of quilombos at Campo Grande, were violently subdued.[129] But, as I argued in reference to the fear of quilombos near the town of Sabará, Minas Gerais, the proliferation of normative models of reproduction, of both the married couple and the plantation, were equally as effective ways to re-landscape colonial visuality in counter to quilombos. Perhaps, then, Rolim's choice to name his plantation "Quilombo" was meant to render visible exactly what I have been arguing in this chapter: the real fear was not that plantation were counter to quilombos, but that quilombos and their counter-colonial landscaping practices already existed inside the plantations.

In this way, Rolim's choice, at the very least, marks what I have been arguing as the nefarious threat posed by the existence of quilombos: that they rendered visible the artifice of colonial landscaping practices, and in so doing exposed the anti-empire empire for what it already was, an active political promotion of colonialism as a natural and inherent process, while obscuring legacies of slavery, environmental degradation, and the global circulation of botanicals, bodies, and ideologies that gave rise to it. Yet this obscuring was only that: the rebellious possibilities of rebellion and maroonage were still cultivated through the material and representational manifestations of plantations, and it is this reality that the landscaping of colonial visuality tried to obscure.

I began by arguing that the proliferation of the word "quilombo," both in colonial

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[128] Donald Ramos, "O quilombo e o sistema escravista em Minas Gerais do século XVIII," in *Liberdade por um fio*, 165.

[129] On the campaign against the Campo Grande quilombos, especially in relation to an original written account and group of maps meant to document the campaign, see Laura de Mello e Souza, "Violência e práticas culturais no cotidiano de uma expedição contra quilombolas – Minas Gerais, 1769," in *Liberdade por um fio*, 193-212. For the seminal account of the quilombos at Campo Grande, see José Tarcísio Martins, *Quilombo do Campo Grande: A história de Minas roubada do Povo* (São Paulo: Editora A Gazeta Maçônica, 1995).

documents and current historiography, works to concretize the distinction between quilombos and plantations, and thus render quilombos as militantly resistant to the plantation system. This figuration, I noted, ignored the use of quilombo-as-verb, aquilombar, and the way the attachment of its past participle, aquilombado, was applied to persons, landscapes, and plantation production that threatened to disorder the plantation. At the risk of grounding or concretizing this colonial fear, I termed it "the plantation, aquilombado" in order to both render "aquilombado" as a counter-colonial praxis and historical lens, and to emphasize the processes of transculturation and diasporic memory contained in attaching a Kimbundu-Portuguese root to a prefigured colonial taxonomy like "the plantation."

Working through this formulation, I traced how the positioning of the quilombo as a mobile praxis and a performance of identity works not only to re-animate the images that disseminated the ideologies I collectively termed "colonial visuality," but also to provide a lens on to the mapping and writing of the history of anti-quilombo military campaigns through the Buraco do Tatú map. As quilombolas disordered the plantation from the outside, and through, potentially, the cultivation of slave subsistence gardens from the inside, the "apparition" of the quilombo seemingly confounded the logical order of the Buraco do Tatú map's artist. The deeply subversive analysis of visual imagery and text records I have undertaken in this chapter is meant to provide a case study for the deployment of "aquilombado" as a lens for the analysis of documents and images. This charge is reflected is the reflexivity of the very verb I emphasize here. As Robert W. Slenes asked, "Will we aquilombar ourselves?")[130]

[130] Slenes, "Apresentação," in Gomes, *A hidra e os pântanos*, 21-22.

Figures to Chapter One

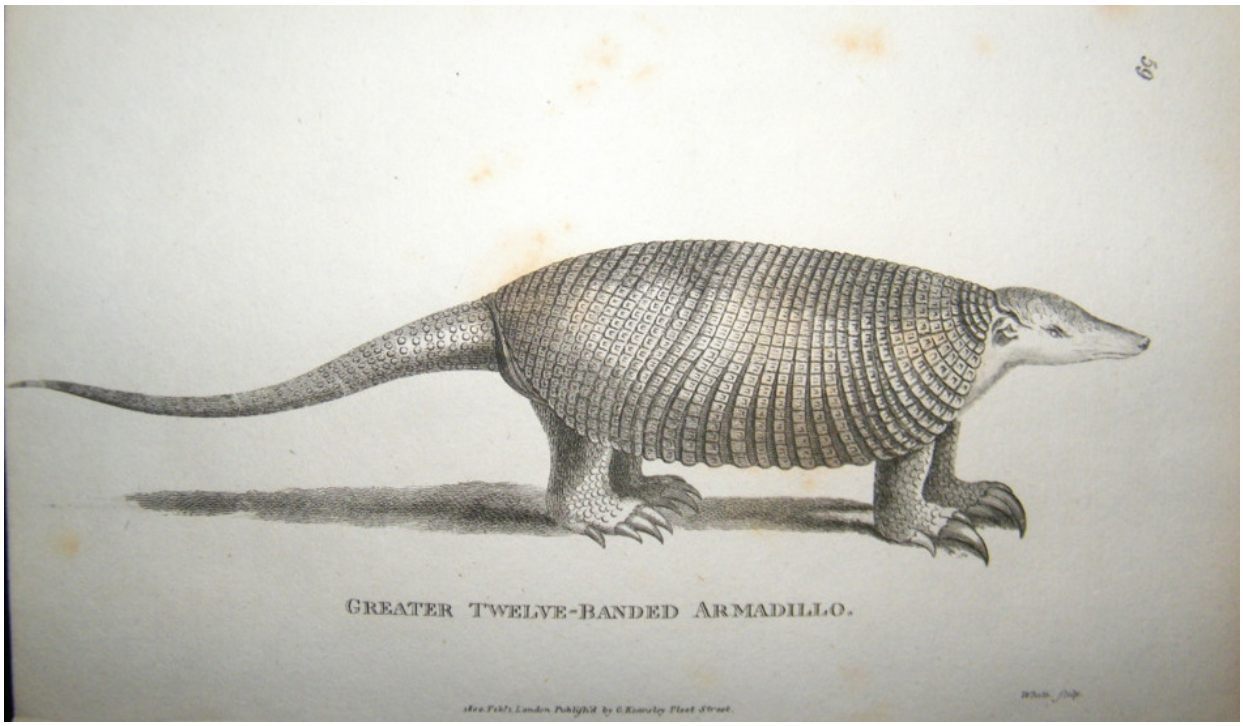

Figure 1.1
"Greater twelve-banded Armadillo," 1800. Plate 59, following page 192, in George Shaw, *General Zoology, or Systematic Natural History*, Volume 1, Part 1 (London: Printed by Thomas Davison, 1800). Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Figure 1.2
"Gestalte van een swarte slaaf en slavinne," 1718. Fold-out plate following page 94 in J.D. Herlein, *Beschryvinge van de Volk-Plantinge Zuriname* (Leeuwarden: Meindert Injema, 1718). John Carter Brown Library, Providence.

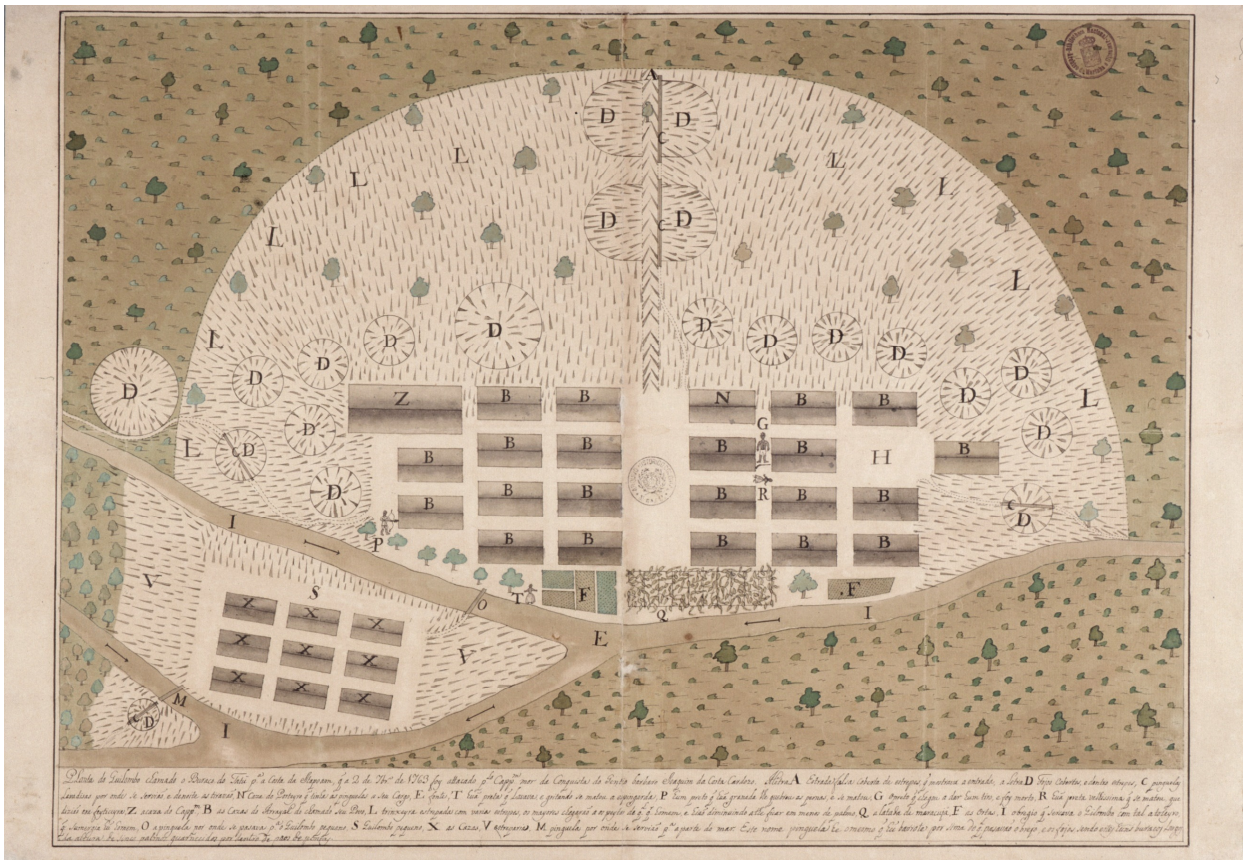

Figure 1.3
Unrecorded artist, *Planta do quilombo chamado Buraco do Tatu para a costa da Itapoa, que a 2 de setembro de 1763 foi atacado pelo Capitao-mor da Conquista do Gentio Bárbaro Joaquim da Costa Cardozo*, 1763. Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon.

Figure 1.4
Frans Post, *De suikerfabriek en de plantage van Engenho Real*, ca. 1662. Oil on canvas. Museum Boijmans Ven Beuningen, Rotterdam; catalog 2116 (1962).

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quens ſit & domeſtica, tamque excellentis uſus, ut vaſtiſſimi orbis Americani incolis, abunde victum ſuppediter.

Tapuyeri vita & moribus agreſtiores, nec Mandihocam hanc, nec quicquam ſimile plantant, ſed arborum fructibus, variis herbis & melle agreſti ſe ſuſtentant. Inter radices quas co-

medere amant, eſt *Mandihoca* quædam ſilveſtris, ſponte proveniens, frutexque arboreſcens: cæterum ſativæ ſimillima, ſi caulem & folia conſideres, verum dignitate longè inferior. Mediterraneis *Cuguacucuremia*, maris accolis *Cuacû-mandyba* dicta. Cujus Iconem expreſſam hîc videre eſt.

CAP. III.

De melle Silveſtri.

MIſſis iis, quæ vel ab aliis ante me tractata, ut Ambra-griſea & nigra, Lapis Bezoar, vel aliunde huc ſunt tranſlata, ut Zinziber, Tabacum, Oriza, Goſſipium, Milium Turcicum, Anil, vel Indigo; aliiſque præteritis, quæ potiſſimum quæſtui, non autem Medicinæ ſunt comparata: Illa tantum perſtringenda duxi, quæ Incolis longa experientia innotuerunt, atque in Medicinam ſunt recepta, atque à me ad artis noſtræ incrementum proſpero uſurpata ſucceſſu.

Inter prima quidem, Braſilianorum ſolertia, etiam antequam Canna ſaccharifera hîc coleretur, mel Silveſtre, quod ipſi *Iira* vocant, ex vaſtiſſimis ſilvis & ſaltibus ſibi comparavit, quod in uſu atque deliciis, Europæis æque ac gentilibus, tam ſanis quam ægris habetur. Cujus dignitates ingenti mortalium bono quotidie magis magiſque illuſtrantur.

Apes, *Eiruba* illis dictæ, diverſorum generum hîc reperiuntur, quæ in arboribus, miris & variis modis nidificantes, noſtris quidem non plane ſunt diſſimiles, ſed utcumque paulo minores, quarum examina ubique peregrinari videas. Regem vero eligant, nec ne, non ſatis hactenus conſtat. Reliqua quæ de illarum regimine produntur, ob difficiles ad eas in nemora aditus, nondum experiti datum eſt. Ignavum pecus, fucos, crabrones, œſtra, veſpas

Figure 1.5
"De Mandhioca," 1648. Page 55 from Willem Piso, *Medicina Brasiliensi*, Book 4, in George Marcgrave and Willem Piso, *Historia Naturalis Brasiliae* (Leiden. Batavorum, apud Franciscus Hackium et Amstelodami apud Lud. Elzevirium (Compiled by Joannes de Laet), 1648). Department of Special Collections, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

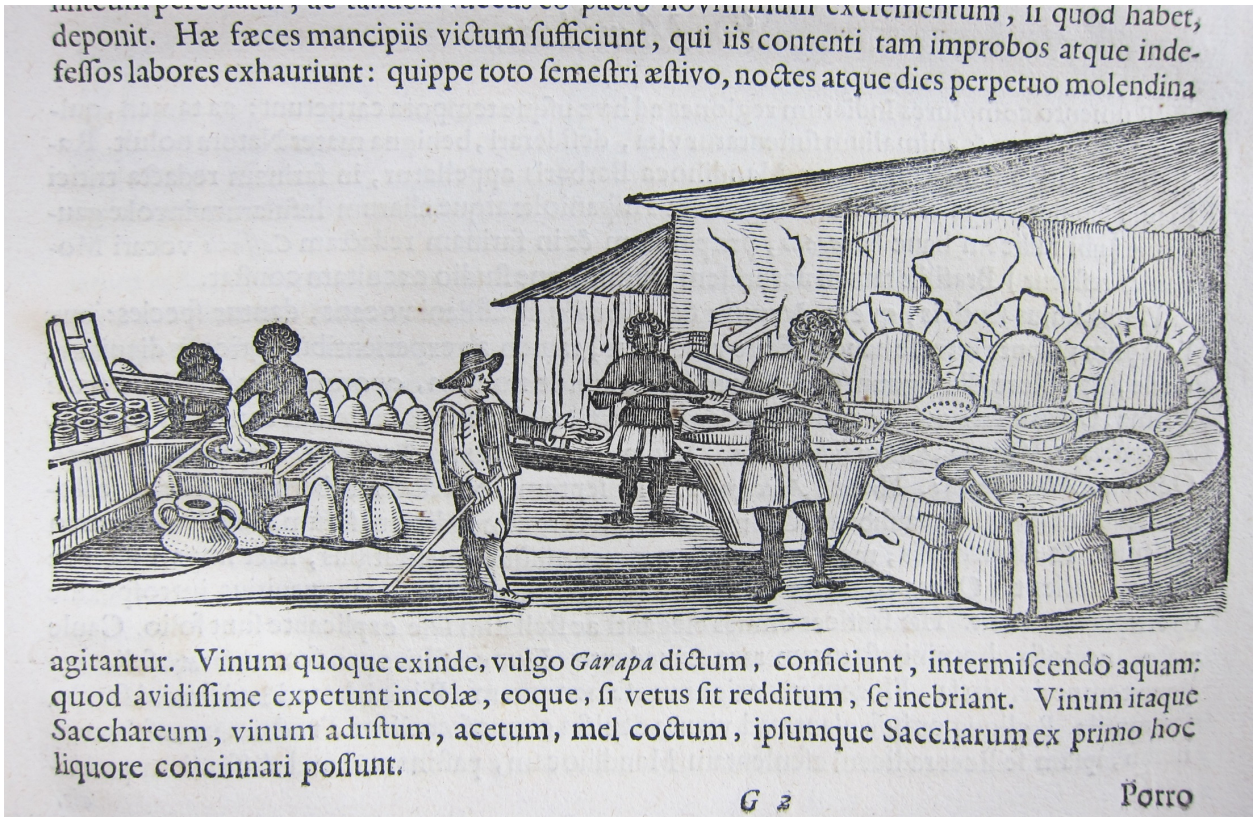

Figure 1.6
"De Saccharo," 1648. Page 52 from Willem Piso, *Medicina Brasiliensi*, Book 4, in George Marcgrave and Willem Piso, *Historia Naturalis Brasiliae* (Leiden. Batavorum, apud Franciscus Hackium et Amstelodami apud Lud. Elzevirium (Compiled by Joannes de Laet), 1648). Department of Special Collections, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

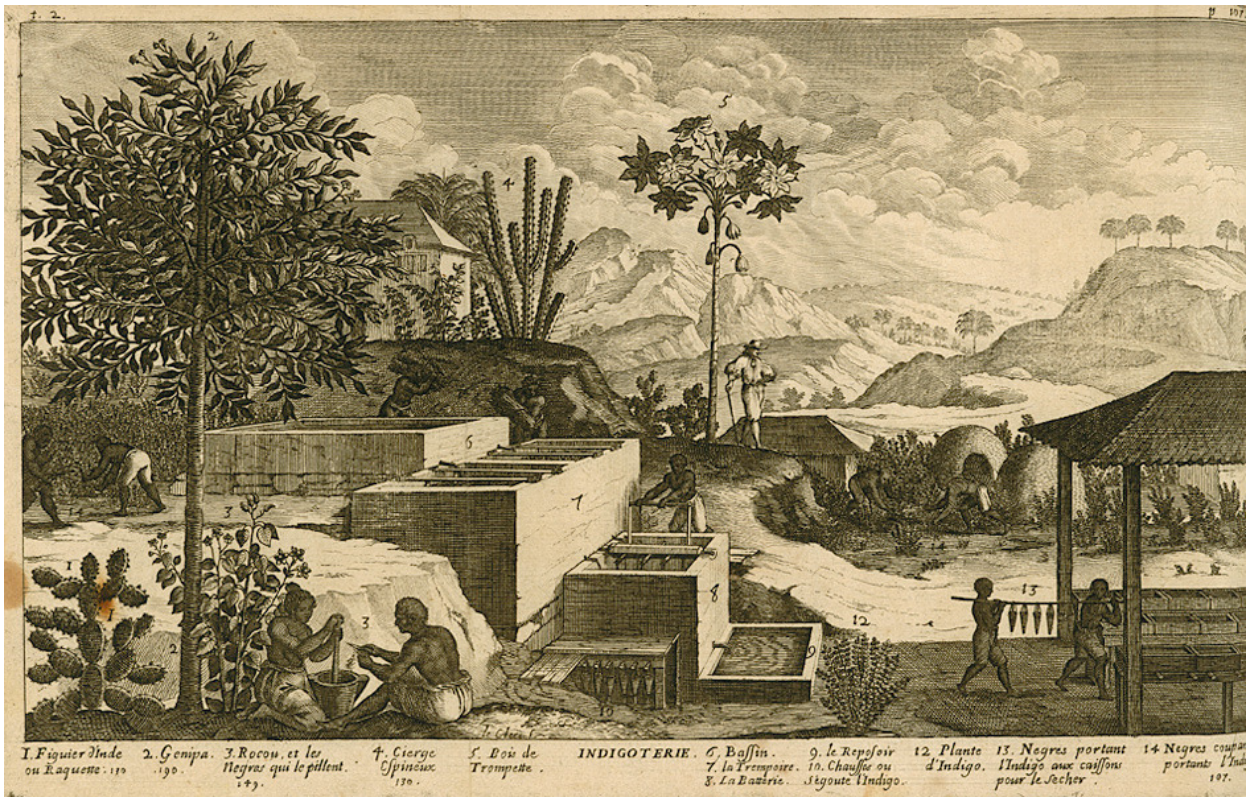

Figure 1.7
"Indigoterie," 1667. Plate 1 in Jean-Baptiste du Tertre, *Histoire générale des Antilles habitées par les François*, vol. 2 (Paris: Chez Thomas Iolly, 1667). Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

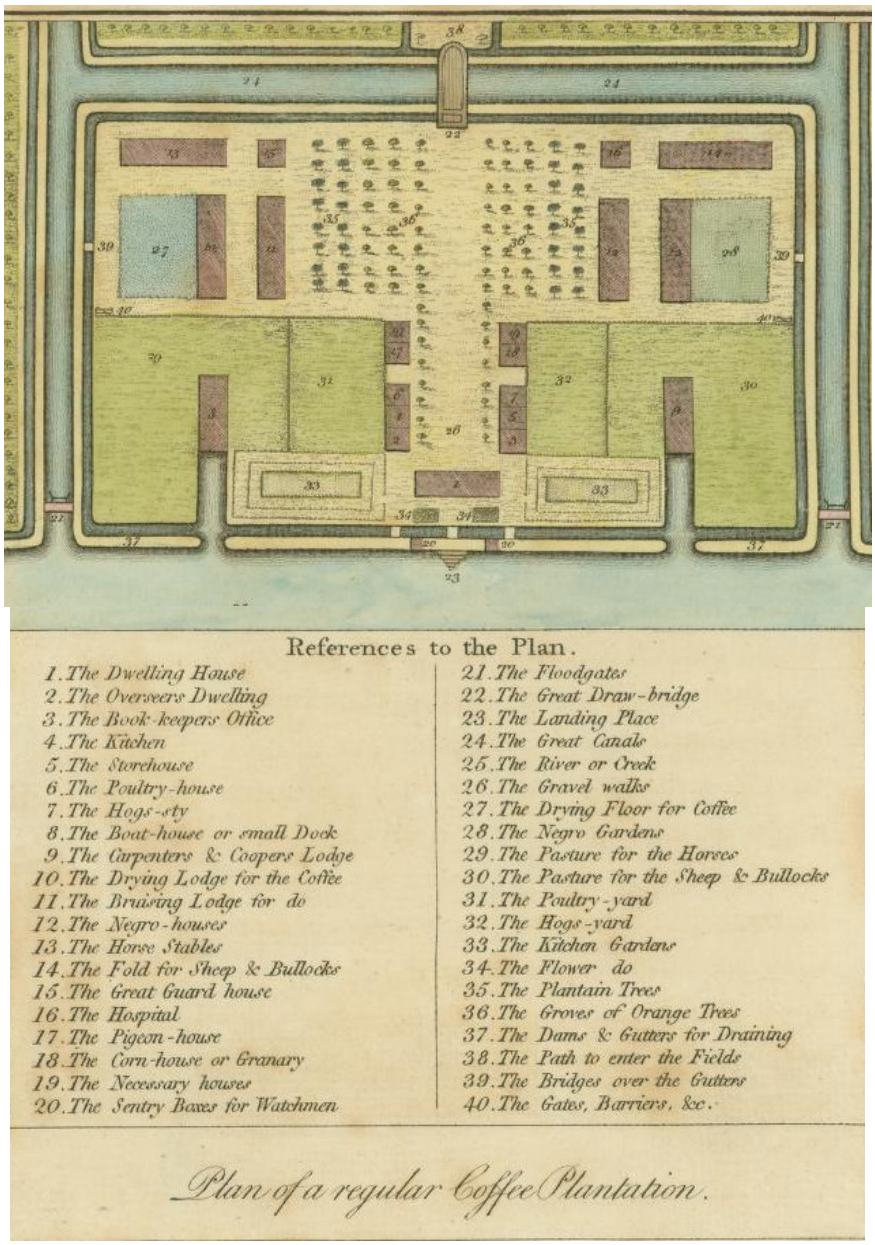

Figure 1.8
"Plan of a regular Coffee Plantation," 1813. Plate following page 367 in John Stedman, *Narrative, of a five years' expedition against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam, in Guiana on the Wild Coast of South America; from the year 1772, to 1777*, Volume 2 (London: Printed for J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church Yard, & Th. Payne, Pall Mall: 1813). John Carter Brown Library, Providence.

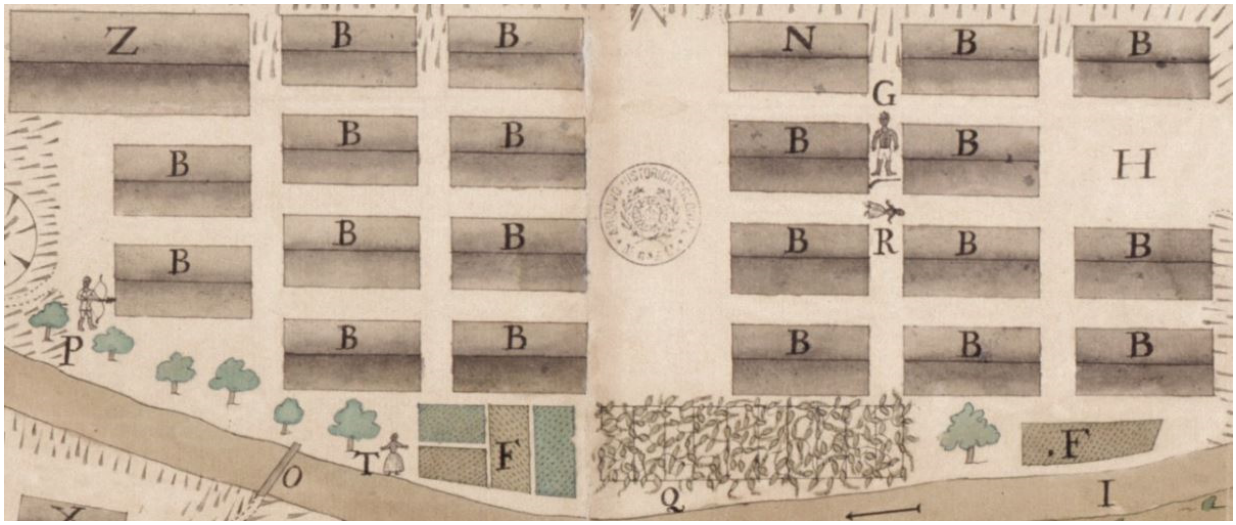

Figure 1.9
Detail of Figure 1.3, *Planta do quilombo chamado Buraco do Tatu para a costa da Itapoa, que a 2 de setembro de 1763 foi atacado pelo Capitao-mor da Conquista do Gentio Bárbaro Joaquim da Costa Cardozo*, 1763. Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon, Portugal.

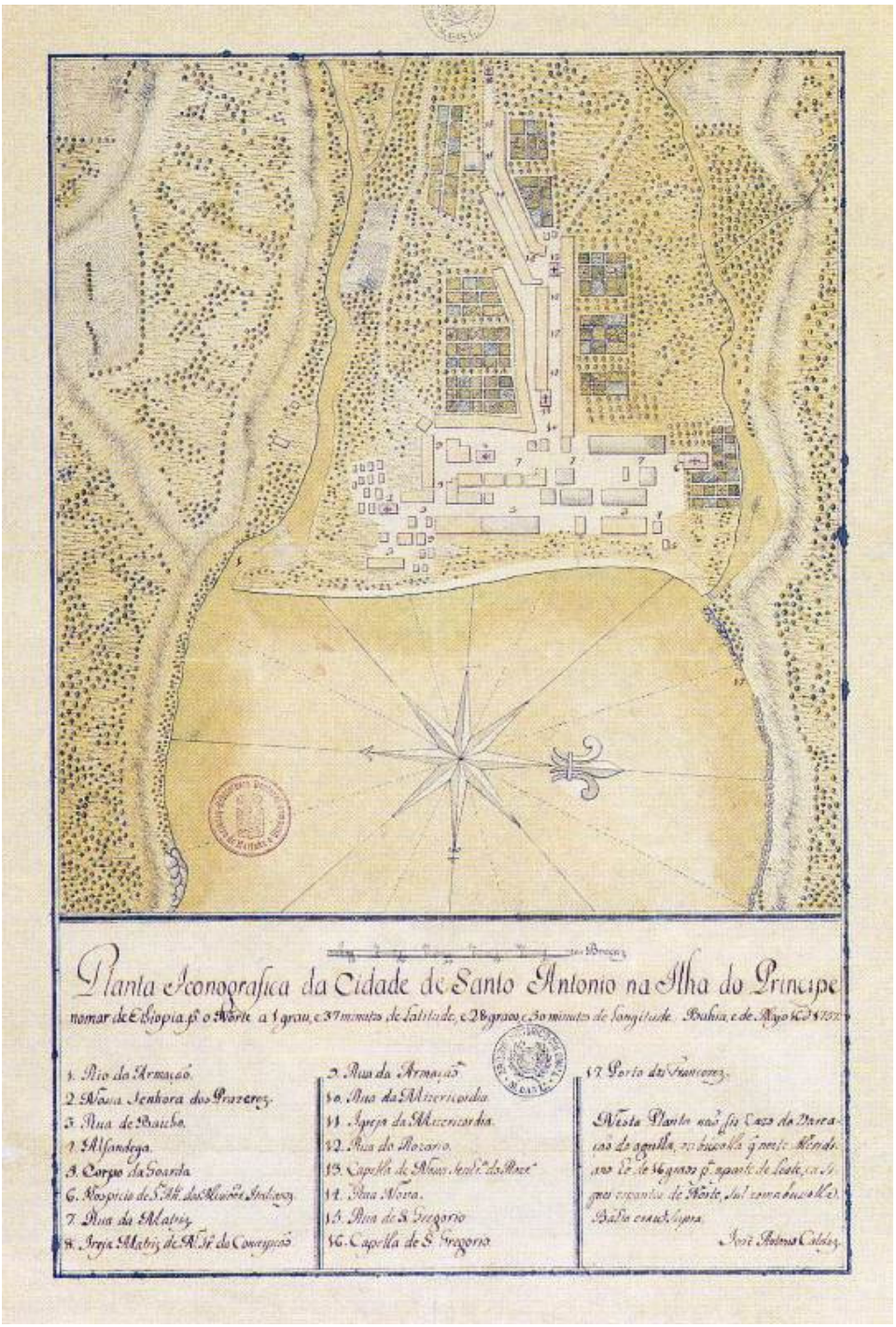

Figure 1.10
José Antonio Caldas, *Planta iconografica da Cidade de Santo Antonio na Ilha do Principe*, 1757. Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon.

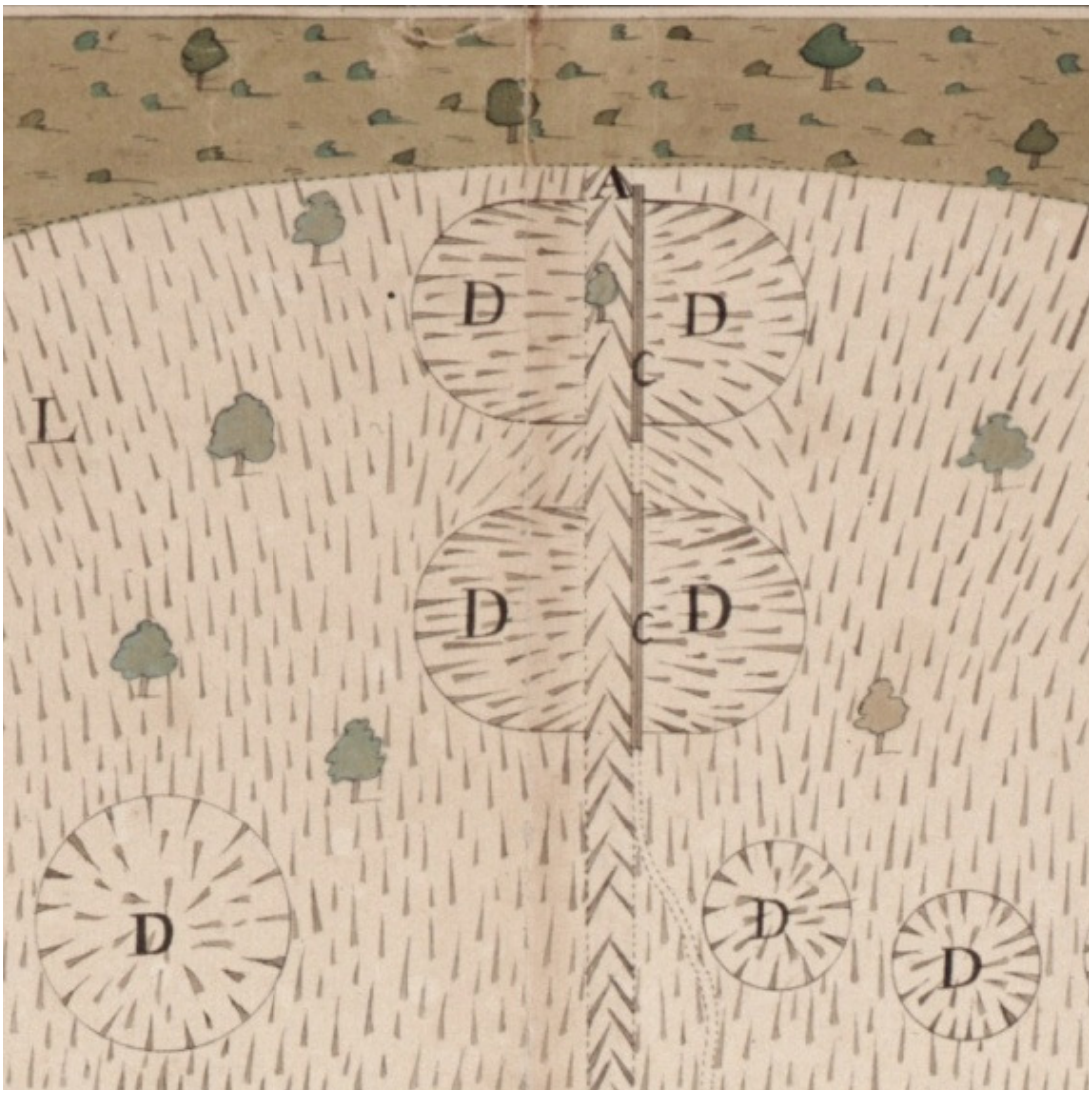

Figure 1.11
Detail of Figure 1.3, *Planta do quilombo chamado Buraco do Tatu para a costa da Itapoa, que a 2 de setembro de 1763 foi atacado pelo Capitao-mor da Conquista do Gentio Bárbaro Joaquim da Costa Cardozo*, 1763. Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon, Portugal.

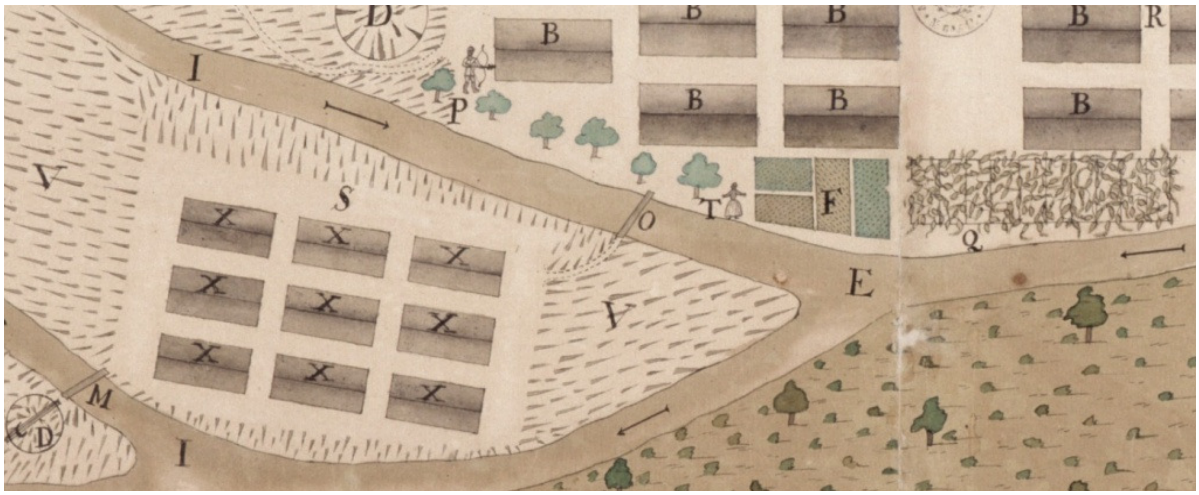

Figure 1.12
Detail of Figure 1.3, *Planta do quilombo chamado Buraco do Tatu para a costa da Itapoa, que a 2 de setembro de 1763 foi atacado pelo Capitao-mor da Conquista do Gentio Bárbaro Joaquim da Costa Cardozo*, 1763. Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon, Portugal.

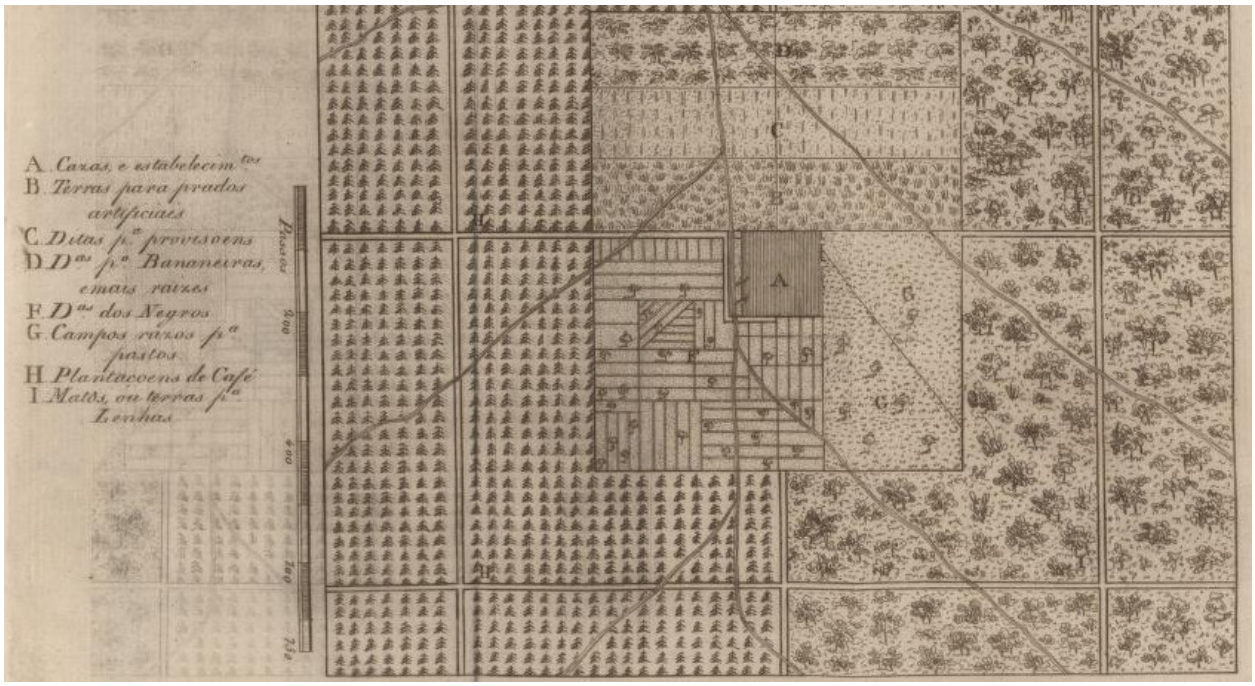

Figure 1.13
"Fazenda de Mr. A em S. Domingos, de duzentos, e vinte cinco quadrados," 1799 (detail). Fold-out 3, book 3, in José Mariano da Conceição Veloso, *O Fazendeiro do Brasil*, Volume 2 (Lisbon: Simão Thaddeo Ferreira, 1799). John Carter Brown Library, Providence.

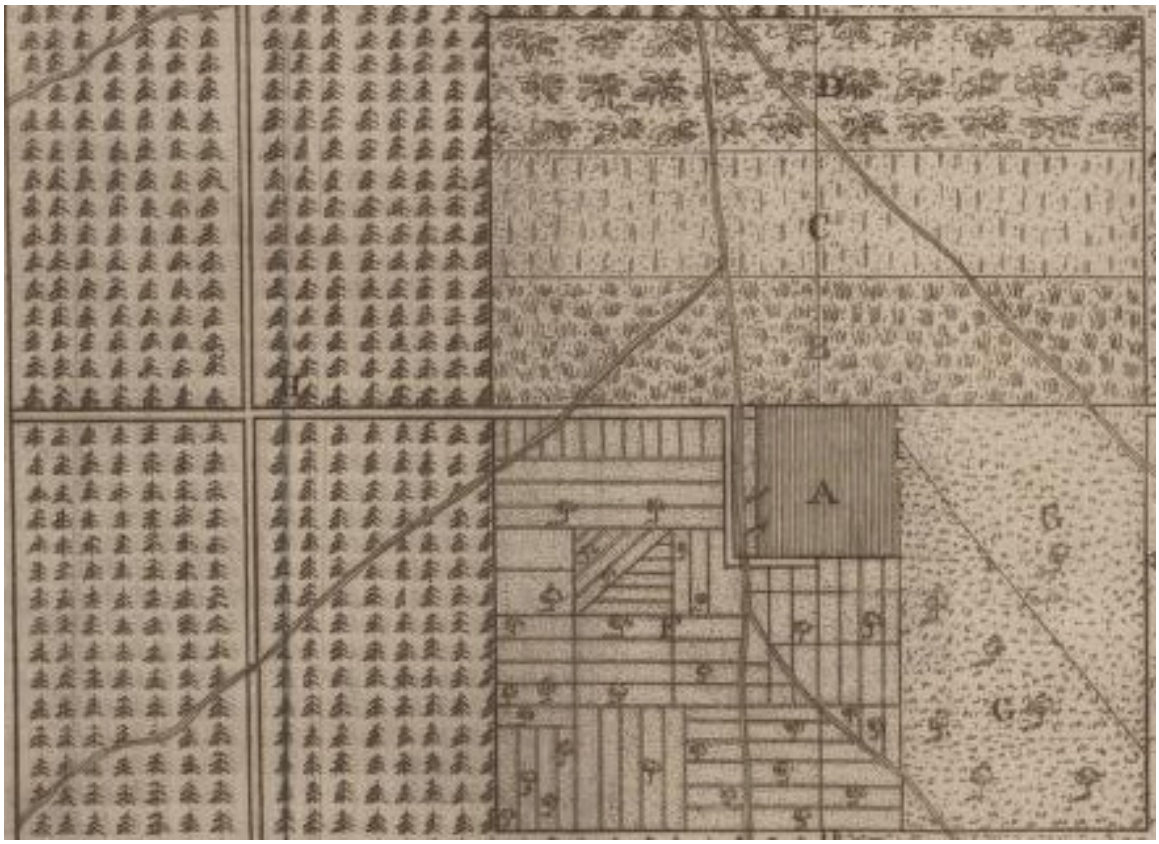

Figure 1.14
Detail of Figure 1.13, "Fazenda de Mr. A em S. Domingos, de duzentos, e vinte cinco quadrados," 1799 (detail). Fold-out 3, book 3, in José Mariano da Conceição Veloso, *O Fazendeiro do Brasil*, Volume 2 (Lisbon: Simão Thaddeo Ferreira, 1799). John Carter Brown Library, Providence.

Chapter Two

Dangerous Looking

The archive of the Third Carmelite Order of Nuns in Salvador contains a work order dated September 7, 1758, commissioning "Master Sculptor" Francisco das Chagas to produce three sculptures of Christ for the Order's church and convent.[1] The document describes the statues and the fee to be paid for each: "Christ our Lord crucified," 76,000 *milreis*; the "Lord affixed to the stone," 50,000 *milreis*; and the "Lord with the Cross on his back," 50,000 *milreis*.[2] Each was to be "eight palms high," decorated with "glass eyes" and "feet of ivory."[3] In providing the name of the sculptor, and the date and location of the commission, the order stands out against a paucity of documentation of the individual lives of free black artisans during the golden age of Bahian sculpture.[4] While the esteemed status of Chagas, commonly referred to as the "Bahian Aleijadinho," remains unquestioned in the historiography of eighteenth century Bahian sculpture, records of Chagas' life and work are so sparse and contradictory that multiple scholars doubt the authorship of every sculpture currently attributed to him.[5] At least two, and potentially all three, of the sculptures described in the work order did not survive the convent's 1788 fire. "Christ our Lord Crucified" could potentially be the *Senhor Morto* ("Dead Lord") currently displayed as Chagas' work in the convent's annex (Figure 2.1); yet an analysis by art historian

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[1] AOTC, Resoluções de 1745-1793, folio 41r. Even the known records of Chagas' name are contradictory. The 1758 work order gives his name as "Francisco das Chagas." José Roberto Teixeira Leite gives his name as "Francisco Manoel das Chagas" in his essay "Negros, Pardos, e Mulatos na Pintura e na Escultura Brasileira do Século XVIII," in *A Mão Afro-Brasileira: Significado da Contribuicão Artística e Histórica*, org. Emanoel Araujo (São Paulo: Imprensa Oficial do Estado de São Paulo / Museu AfroBrasil, 2010), 62. Marcus Wood, in his study *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America*, 1780-1865 (New York: Routledge, 2000) lists it as "Francisco Xavier Chagas," and these three renderings are among many other variations. I choose to keep the simplified version of "Francisco das Chagas" here for the sake of consistency and brevity.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Jacques Résimont, "Os escultores baianos Manoel Inácio da Costa e Francisco das Chagas, 'o Cabra,'" in *O Universo Mágico do Barroco Brasileiro*, org. Emanoel Araújo (São Paulo: SESI, 1998), 153.

[5] "Aleijadinho" is the common nickname of Chagas' better-known contemporary black sculptor, Antônio Francisco Lisboa, who produced a series of commissions for Catholic churches in Congonhas and Ouro Preto in Minas Gerais.

Jacques Résimont casts doubt not only whether *Senhor Morto* is the same statue, but whether it is even one of Chagas' works.[6]

Speculations of Chagas' artistic genius; identity as a free black sculptor; and his aesthetic and political influences converge in analyses of *Cristo na Coluna* ("Christ on the Column"), a work commonly attributed to Chagas' hand.[7] *Cristo na Coluna* today occupies the south end of the convent's sacristy (Figure 2.2). The polychromed stone sculpture stands roughly eight palms high, inlaid with glass eyes. The statue depicts the effects of Christ's flagellation at the hands of Roman soldiers prior to crucifixion, as mentioned in two of the four canonical gospels – a common commission for Brazil's wealthy religious orders at the height of the Brazilian baroque.[8] Stylistically, the work's dynamic emphasis on the emotional excesses of embodied pain is typical of Catholic baroque sculpture, as it contrasts the fragile volatility of Christ's naturalistic body against the static monumentality of the stone column to which he is bound. Christ's sculptor has effectively created a chiseled body on the verge of collapse. Portrayed in an exaggerated contrapposto, Christ's knees buckle under the weight of his flagellated torso, while his crossed hands hang loosely, his wrists immobilized and bound to a white stone column. Liberal use of dark patches of red paint, applied so heavily as to appear purple or black, indicate surface wounds, the effect of gashes, whips, and cuts on Christ's skin. The paint's heavy application allowed the excess to drip, mimicking the natural effect of dripping blood. The blood continues to stream out of Christ's nose, referencing the internal wounds from the beatings described to occur prior to the whipping.

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[6] Résimont, "Os escultores baianos," 162; Leite, "Negros, Pardos, e Mulatos," 62. Résimont attributes *Senhor Morto* to an unknown artist whose work is "without a point of comparison" in Bahian religious sculpture. Leite notes that *Senhor Morto* is also commonly identified as the work of Manuel Inácio da Costa or Félix Pereira Guimarães, other sculptors who created pieces for the Convent. However, a large sign on the Convent's entrance today entices visitor to come see *Senhor Morto* as it is the work of "the slave, *o Cabra*."

[7] Like *Senhor Morto*, the authorship of *Cristo na Coluna* is similarly questioned by Résimont, who attributes it to an unknown artist he names the "Master of *Cristo da Coluna*" (162).

[8] Christ's flagellation is described in John 19:1 and Matthew 27:26.

Any interpretive route to this sculpture must begin with its backside (Figure 2.3). Marcus Wood, reading the statue's subject matter through Chagas' racial identity and histories of representation of the enslaved in the black Atlantic, has described it as a "landscape of pain," a backside that

> [I]s a sculpture within a sculpture, as if the perfect skin of a man, finished by the sculptor, were then worked upon by the torturer, his chisel a whip, his material flesh. This beaten thing should be in a trauma ward, not a church, and indeed it is presented today in a glass case at the end of the sumptuous Baroque sacristy of the Convent. Chagas's work is separated from the touch and the gaze by reassuring reflections and a hard transparent wall; it is as if it had to be put in some kind of aesthetic intensive care unit, or protective tank.[9]

This "protective tank" makes manifest the double-bind of viewership that animates *Cristo na Coluna*'s iconographic impact and affective response. Simultaneously a barrier and an invitation, *Cristo na Coluna*'s glass case separates the work from the sacristy's architecture while highlighting it as an object and a scene to be viewed, marking the immediate presence and undeniable distance of Christ's body and Christ's pain. White glass eyes convey this: large and heavy-set, they roll back into their sockets, unable to see, marking not only the collapsing of external realities during the infliction of pain, but the impossibility of Christ to apprehend his own embodied experience.[10] Even in the centuries when the Convent was in use, seeing this sculpture at all would have been limited largely to the convent's members: the vision of Christ's nude and beaten body available only to a group of celibate women.

. . .

[9] Wood, *Blind Memory*, 265.
[10] See Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).

One day short of seventy-one years later, on September 6, 1829, Bahia's six-member prison reform commission submitted their report to the Municipal Council of Salvador.[11] The commission was one of many in the newly-independent Brazilian nation, charged by the imperial government to analyze the workings of prisons and charity houses and to forward recommendations for their improvement following the new Imperial Constitution of 1824.[12] While for many years, the authors wrote, the provincial government and other "philanthropic men" had tried to "rid [the prisons] of abuses, and improve their physical state and the morale of their prisoners," in the commission's opinion, legislation on this issue had lacked the "earnestness which is imperiously demanded."[13] In response, the commission undertook "a minute and visual examination of all the Prisons . . . and convinced of the importance, and usefulness of an accurate and faithful report, does not doubt to inform you that the Prisons do not have the necessary capacity, finding them in a very unclean state . . ."[14] The commission's principal concern was the *enchovia* of Bahia's main prison, a special wing used to house and rehabilitate those sentenced to capital punishments or floggings.[15] The report vividly describes the experience of being inside the enchovia: dark, damp conditions impeded air circulation, and the lack of airflow combined with the prisoners' excrement yielded "putrid exhalations, that

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[11] AHM, Papeis avulsos, Oficios e Requerimenos: Escravos, Est. 68, Prot. 05, untitled document dated 6 September 1829.

[12] Patricia Ann Aufderheide, *Order and Violence: Social Deviance and Social Control in Brazil, 1780-1840* (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1976), 313. Aufderheide includes a discussion of three of the national commissions' findings, from Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, and Cachoeira.

[13] AHM, Papeis avulsos, Oficios e Requerimenos: Escravos, Est. 68, Prot. 05, untitled document dated 6 September 1829; page 2.

[14] Ibid.

[15] William Young, a British traveler, produced the most celebrated foreign account of time in an enchovia during his confinement in Lisbon in 1828, describing it as a place "where thieves, murderers, and vagabonds of every description are confined . . . a horrid place; and is often made use of as a punishment for prisoners from other parts of the gaol." William Young, *Portugal in 1828* (London: Henry-Colburn, 1828), 103-104. Young's account of the conditions inside the Limoeiro was popularly reproduced in the London-based *The Mirror of Literature, Amusement, and Instruction* (14), November 21, 1829: 400.

which merging all over the house, produce an infectious smell."[16] The report ties the poor air quality to the social delinquency of its inmates, noting that prisoners could potentially get so acclimated to the unbearable sights and smells of the enchovia they would never be able to re-enter Bahian society: "You can ensure that in these places never penetrated compassion, nor humanity, and to exist under the influence of such causes so extraordinarily deleterious to health . . . that man is liable to get used to all the circumstances."[17] Such conditions, argued the commission, run against the purpose of prisons, which are "designed to correct the depraved morals of these Individuals, and submitting them to industry to inspire in them a love of work, making them useful to themselves, and Society."[18] Based on this, the commission presented eighteen recommendations to the council, ranging from cleaning rooms, to preventing the illicit movement of "spirits, playing cards, and weapons" in the prison, and opening up certain areas to allow prisoners to better hear Mass from the prison Oratory.[19]

The commission in Salvador was charged with not only recommending reforms for the prison's operations, but also for the types and methods of punishments it administered to its inmates.[20] The majority of corporal punishments carried out in prisons were the floggings of

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[16] AHM, Papeis avulsos, Oficios e Requerimenos: Escravos, Est. 68, Prot. 05, untitled document dated 6 September 1829.

[17] Ibid. See also Aufderheide, *Order and Violence* 298 and 313 on discussions of air quality and general environment in Brazil's colonial prison system. Conceptions of air quality were intimately bound with forming the relationship between blackness and criminality in Brazil. Prison air quality was a constant concern for reform commissions: "Prisons should not be a place of misery, because society does not have the right to deprive a prisoner of pure air" (AHM, Atas da Comissão de visita das prisões civis, militares, e ecclesiasticas, 1829: 22). As a result, a common sentence for prisoners was exile to Portuguese colonies, chiefly Brazil or Africa, in order to populate these colonies. Colonies were understood as having worse climates than Portugal, thus making them more amenable to the social deviance of prisoners – indeed, a majority of the first group of European settlers to Brazil were Portuguese criminals. But this also meant that the native inhabitants of these climates were already acclimatized to poor air quality, thus suiting them for criminal deviance already. In fact, a1780 royal edict states that imprisoned African slaves should not be exiled to Africa, since doing so would be doing them a favor (Aufderheide, *Order and Violence*, 301).

[18] AHM, Papeis avulsos, Oficios e Requerimenos: Escravos, Est. 68, Prot. 05, untitled document dated 6 September 1829.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

slaves in the prison courtyard. This is addressed in points 8 and 9 of the commission's report, where they recommend

> 8th That the post on which slaves are whipped should be removed; avoiding not only the indecency of carrying out punishments close to the Oratory, [but also] as men will undress themselves in front of the cells of women, and vice-versa; placing it in the prison repository, opening up a communication door to the patio, and closing the other on the side of the post.
>
> 9th That in the same repository, form two divisions to keep the black men separate from the black women, who have to be punished at the request of their masters.

These two recommendations make clear that this is a document concerned with the visualization of power in prisons, and with it the quest for invisibility of a violent spectacle decreed as necessary to Brazil's slavery system. In an effort to reform the entirety of Bahia's prison and punishment system for the benefit of society at large, the commission's recommendations center on the visibility, and invisibility, of racialized punishment in explicitly gendered terms: remove the post from open view, and ensure the audience of the whipping spectacle is of the same sex as the body being whipped. In a report that began with a "minute and visual examination" of the prison, the commission's six male members recommend that even they not be allowed to view one of the prison's common acts: the flogging of female slaves.

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We have, then, a document and a sculpture. I will return to both throughout this chapter. *Cristo na Coluna* envisions and performs a scene of a whipping of a nude male, available only to a group of women in a way that allows them to see without being seen. In the commission report,

a recommendation by a group of six men that they be denied the ability to witness the whipping of an enslaved, black, female body; the law incarnating a colonial male perspective view onto female spectator, saving enslaved women from being exposed to nude male flesh, while also saving themselves from being looked at in the process. Together, these two case studies each privilege a certain kind of viewership of violence, a type of looking practice bound to social codes of labor, race, and gender in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Brazil.

This chapter traces the history and practice of the appearance and disappearance of torture as a public and sequestered spectacle in Brazil's urban centers during this period. I argue that Bahia's series of slave revolts in the first four decades of the 1800s rebelled against an entire system of representation, one that situated the spectacle of the publicly tortured black body as the basis of imperial power. This system of representation sought to naturalize the torture of the enslaved by seeking to regulate the visual attention of all Brazilians, enslaved and free by legalizing what and how they saw. I term these regulations "codes of looking." These codes of looking were concretized in legal codes, print culture, and aspects of the built environment constructed throughout colonial and early independent Brazil.

But these codes of looking at the visual culture of Brazilian slavery were also precariously balanced against a potentially rebellious set of counter-aesthetics. I term this "counter-witnessing": a willingly rebellious act of spectatorship or representation that actively undermines the ways in which one is meant, and trained to look. In the following pages, I illustrate how acts of counter-witnessing public slave whippings came to be understood, and feared, as one of the central animators of slave rebellions. As such, throughout the first decades of the nineteenth century, Brazilian visual culture and legal codes are produced to limit the potentially rebellious effects of counter-witnessing, but with increasingly limited success. On

September 7, 1835, shortly after the public whippings carried out following the Malê Rebellion, the Municipal Council of Salvador voted to remove the city's *pelourinho* (whipping post), which had stood since 1549. As such, I argue that the aesthetic and political saliency of the Bahia slave rebellions cannot be divorced from the spectacle of torture of enslaved bodies in Brazil's urban centers during the late colonial and early postcolonial periods. Public slave whippings, once the central organizing principle of Bahian urban visuality, were ceased because the carefully-constructed codes of looking could no longer contain the dangerous potentials of counter-witnessing against which the codes were precariously balanced. In this sense, though not a single Bahian slave rebellion was politically successful, their collective result was the overthrow of the public whipping spectacle, which had long functioned the central public performance of Portuguese and Brazilian imperial authority.

My analysis of the "appearance and disappearance" of torture as a public spectacle should remind readers of Michel Foucault's goal in the opening chapter of *Discipline and Punish* to consider the relatively sudden "disappearance of torture as a public spectacle" in this period.[21] Juxtaposing Chagas' 1758 sculpture and the Commission's 1829 prison decree mirrors the opening scenes of *Discipline and Punish*, where Foucault contrasts a March 2, 1757 account of the execution of the regicide Robert-François Damiens in Paris with an 1838 prison timetable.[22] Reading *Cristo na Coluna* against the report, analyzing the appearance and disappearance and the whipping spectacle in Brazilian urban centers, I refer to the origins of public whippings as a form of corporal punishment as well as their decline. But I also reference their appearance and disappearance from public view; an archaeology of regimes of vision that typologized enslaved

[21] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*: *The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage, 1995), 7, 14.
[22] Ibid, 3-7.

bodies as nonhuman subjects to be punished as either a public spectacle or a sequestered event outside of public reception and the archival record.

Yet what relevance does Foucault's model for understandings of ritualized forms of violence have in a counter-history of violence and spectacle in African slavery in the Americas? In *Blind Memory*, Marcus Wood's foundational study of representations of pain and torture in British and American slavery visual culture, Wood notes that Foucault's central chronological progression from ritualized spectacles of violent punishment to ritualized surveillance completely breaks down "on the plantations of Brazil and French San Domingo in the mid-eighteenth century, and the setting up of elaborate slave codes to order and control the lives and punishment of slaves, the elements of surveillance set out as central to Foucault's eighteenth century reforms are already in place."[23] By contrast, in her study of violent spectacles and codes of race and gender in Jamaica, Diana Paton is similarly suspicious of Foucault's usefulness in writing a history of slavery and imprisonment. Paton focuses on the distinction made by prison reformers between arbitrary corporal punishment and the reformation of prisons along the rule of law, noting the tendency to associate slave whipping with private exercises of power on plantations obscures legacies linking imprisonment and state authority.[24] Prisons in Jamaica, rather than diminishing the violence of slavery (as Foucault would seem to suggest), actually consolidated and intensified it.[25] The 1829 Salvador commission report speaks to this as well: whippings were important, if sequestered, actions deemed a necessary aspect of prison operations, even following the humanistic reforms put in place by Brazilian prison reform councils.

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[23] Wood, *Blind Memory*, 230.
[24] Diana Paton, *No Bond But the Law: Punishment, Race, and Gender in Jamaican State Formation, 1780-1870* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 5-6.
[25] Ibid, 10.

Wood and Paton's critiques represent a push against prevailing histories that disassociate legacies of imprisonment from public punishment and plantation slavery. To bring this critique to its full force as a counter-history of power and spectacle in slavery, we must disentangle the history of surveillance from the history of imprisonment, and the history of ritualized torture from the contradictory empathies of an audience. In sum: in late colonial and early postcolonial Brazil, public torture was dependent on surveillance. Legal codes, urban architecture and representations of whipping spectacles together privileged certain ways of looking at public torture that rested on legal racial and gender distinctions. This was coupled with moves that direct viewers' attention at the victim as they made the witness into a type as necessary to the spectacle as the categories of race and gender that constructed its force. At the same time, as evidenced by the 1829 commission request, there is a calculated push to limit the audience of slave whippings in prison along racial and gendered lines. Thus, the cultural dynamics of audience and viewership on which public spectacles were dependent also impacted the sequestered, even invisible, audience of punishment in Brazilian prisons.

In her essay *Venus in Two Acts*, Saidiya Hartman wrestles with the moral questions and ethical stakes of redressing the broken and violated histories of punishment of the enslaved. Her analysis is trans-temporal, as for her "narrating counter-histories of slavery has always been inseparable from writing a history of the present."[26] In this way, I do not intend the political or ethical force of my analysis to stop in Brazil, in 1835, or with the problems and questions raised by reproducing or analyzing the violence perpetrated against enslaved bodies in these pages. The archival materials concerning whippings, imprisonment, and punishment of the enslaved I consult in this chapter, the language that provides the basis for the enslaved punished, "are not about them, but rather about the violence, excess, mendacity, and reason that seized hold of their

[26] Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts." *Small Axe* 26 (June 2008): 4.

lives, transformed them into commodities and corpses, and identified them with names tossed off as insults and crass jokes . . . The archive is, in this case, a tomb, a display of the violated body."[27] Why then, Hartman asks, "subject the dead to new dangers and to a second order of violence" by reproducing and re-examining the very accounts used to render their lives as violated spectacle?[28]

The political and ethical stakes of this project are thus built into the visual analysis of the images reproduced in the following pages. The danger in reproducing the spectacular aesthetics of slave suffering emerges through empathetic identification that can easily displace the suffering of the slave subject at the moment it becomes most visible. This problem has been at the core of much recent scholarship on the aesthetics of slavery, particularly in tandem with efforts to analyze the memorialization of slavery through theories of trauma and collective consciousness.[29] Yet issues like the problematics of witnessing, conceptions of collective trauma and embodied experience, and the role of images of slavery in historical analysis contain a common thread: the need to understand the dynamics of audience in the visual culture of slavery. The visual culture of slave punishment is defined through images, objects, and texts united by a

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[27] Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," 2.

[28] Ibid, 5.

[29] An extensive body of research has been devoted to the relations between cultural trauma and memory/memorialization in recent years. For recent studies of memorialization in the public sphere, see Ana Lucia Araujo (ed.), *Living History: Encountering the Memory of the Heirs of Slavery* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009); Ana Lucia Araujo, *Public Memory of Slavery: Victims and Perpetrators in the South Atlantic* (Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2010); and Celeste-Marie Bernier and Judie Newman (eds.), *Public Art, Memorials, and Atlantic Slavery* (New York: Routledge, 2009). Ideas of collective consciousness, particularly as emerging from the collective trauma of slavery, began with Frantz Fanon's foundational work in *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1952). Ron Eyerman's *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001) also explores cultural trauma-as-memory from a distinctly American perspective, while Saidiya V. Hartman's *Lose Your Mother: A Journey Along the Atlantic Slave Route* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), presents a much more nuanced look at the possibilities of memory and loss afforded through transatlantic perspectives. For works that explore all of these issues, albeit from a decidedly Anglophone Atlantic lens, see three foundational studies by Marcus Wood: *Blind Memory; Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); and *The Horrible Gift of Freedom: Atlantic Slavery and the Representation of Emancipation* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010).

performative agency that actively manipulate the distinctions between subjects and spectacles, empathy and voyeurism, and power and rebellion through what Huey Copeland and Krista Thompson term "barriers to viewership" that emerge even when images of slavery seem most visible.[30] Who is called to participate in scenes of slave punishment? Why are they called? And in what ways are they asked to participate – as punishers, empathizers, voyeurs, or agents of resistance and rebellion? And so while the spectacle of slave punishment is able to reproduce its power through primarily visual means, as I hope to demonstrate, this reproduction of power lays so bare the logics of racial and gendered hegemony that images themselves become a battleground, sowing the seeds of rebellion from the most unlikely positions.[31] As such, the rest of the chapter weaves back and forth between Brazil and other cultural histories, between historical narratives and the present day, narrating a counter-history of looking at the violence and the punishment of the enslaved that envisions the rebellious possibility of violent spectacle through the documents that legalize and describe slave whippings, the images and sculptures that re-imagine its practice, and the history of slave rebellions against a carefully-constructed system of representation.

Pelourinhos, Legal Codes, and Urban Visuality

The urban environments of colonial Brazilian cities were engineered as theaters for the staging of public punishment.[32] These urban theaters were centered on pelourinhos, tall stone

[30] Huey Copeland and Krista Thompson, "Perpetual Returns: New World Slavery and the Matter of the Visual." *Representations* 113 (Winter 2011): 2.

[31] On "clandestine forms of resistance" see "Redressing the Pained Body: Toward a Theory of Practice," in Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 49-78.

[32] For an elaboration of how colonial Brazilian cities were engineered as "theaters of power," see Silvia Hunold Lara, *Fragmentos setecentistas: Escravidão, Cultura, e Poder na América Portuguesa* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2007). Lara convincingly outlines how the very distribution of colonial subjects in urban space was in fact a distribution of power relations throughout the city, and in turn, cities functioned already as an arena for the reproduction of imperial authority, even outside of the spectacles I describe here. For the foundational discussion

columns symbolic of imperial secular authority that doubled as public whipping posts.[33] Nearly every colonial Brazilian city displayed a pelourinho, along with a tall stone crucifix representing the authority of the Catholic Church. As such, pelourinhos were tightly bound to the maintenance of social order, just as they served to anchor the chains which bound criminals during their public whippings.[34] By the late 1700s, floggings of criminals, typically free commoners, were frequent events in Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, Belém, and Minas Gerais.[35] Subjects were led to pelourinhos as their crimes were read aloud, as assembled audiences looked on.[36] As public examples, they marked the criminal as a personification of social deviance, and thus displayed the redemptive and potentially cleansing power of the whip. But they also potentially engendered the disapproval of a witnessing community at the very moment it was meant to mark and display the power of the state to confirm social order.[37]

The design of pelourinhos was tied to their function, with the pelourinhos of wealthy cities decorated in elaborate stone- and metalwork. The pelourinho of Mariana, Minas Gerais, is one of the few extant examples (Figure 2.4). Erected in 1750, deinstalled in 1871, and reconstructed again from original plans in 1970, its multi-tiered stone base and intricate ironwork are decked in the iconography of global empire, local justice, and benevolent violence. At top, a Portuguese imperial crown tops an open globe, symbol of Portuguese maritime global sovereignty. The main column of the pelourinho is decorated to be an imperial jurist, its iron arms balancing the scales of justice against a skyward sword representative of the forced hand of

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on Latin American city planning and its construction of social order, see Ángel Rama, *The Lettered City*, trans. John Charles Chasteen (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996).

[33] Antônio Gilberto Costa, *Rochas e Histórias do Patrimônio Cultural do Brasil e de Minas* (Rio de Janeiro: Bem-Te-Vi, 2009), 135.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sovereignty and Society in Colonial Brazil: The High Court of Bahia and its Judges, 1609-1751* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 236.

[36] Aufderheide, *Order and Violence*, 294.

[37] Ibid.

violence necessary to maintain social order. At center, a Portuguese coat of arms doubles as the pelourinho's pectoral, maintaining the balance between the objects in its arms. At the pelourinho's base are two shackles to which prisoners would have been bound. While, as Marcus Wood has noted, such shackles are presumed stand-ins for the experience of the condemned, they also speak to the chasm of empathy between onlookers and victims.[38] For Wood, shackles like these are often privileged as objects of memory due to their proximity to real bodies, yet at the same time due to the shackles' existence the body is no longer necessary to remember, or pretend to remember, slavery.[39] Today, tourists commonly photograph themselves with hands affixed to the column's shackles, re-creating the position of the punished, further signifying the shackles as an instrument of displaced empathy. Here, in a deft inversion, Portuguese designers have anthropomorphized the pelourinho, conveying the eternal presence of royal authority by humanizing a stone column struggling to balance justice and social order against the violent spectacles that maintained it.

The Mariana pelourinho displays how, in the context of creating public arenas for the punishment of the condemned, the imperial government needed to display the consolidation of state power against the empathy of audience by proscribing ways of visualizing punishment while neutralizing its spectacular effects. Images of Portuguese cities that focus on pelourinhos present the dual symbolic and physical functions of pelourinhos while actively avoiding the rebelliousness of audiences. Strategically, Portuguese colonial depictions of pelourinhos contain two nearly-universal aspects: they are always depicted as part of a large open square (*praça*), and the pelourinho is never shown during a whipping. In *Villa de Abrantes da Comarca do Norte*, an anonymous member of the 1793 Jesuit mission to Bahia presents an aerial view of the sole praça

[38] Wood, *Blind Memory*, 220-221. Wood's original observation was about slave collars, but applies equally to the shackles I describe here.
[39] Ibid, 223.

in Abrantes, a small town northwest of Salvador in Bahia (Figure 2.5). Despite the central grid plan of the cityscape, both the city's crucifix and the pelourinho are shown off-center, against a stark backdrop devoid of population. The artist records the city's population as only six inhabitants, its economy sustained by the manual labor and agricultural production of a group of "100 Indians."[40] Absent of onlookers, the pelourinho here functions as a central part of the urban landscape as it remains unseen by any human figure, and more importantly, divorced from its function as the site of public punishments in the town.

Similarly, in *Prospecto da nova Praça do Pelourinho* ("View of the New Pillory Plaza"), Portuguese artist Joaquim José Codina presents an aerial view of the central pelourinho plaza in Belém, capital of Pará province at the mouth of the Amazon (Figure 2.6). Codina was one of two chief artists on Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira's 1783-1792 naturalist expedition to the Amazon funded by Queen Maria I.[41] While Codina's output is primarily noteworthy for its study of Amazonian flora and fauna, here he presents an image that projects a relationship to government authority and presence without proscribing it. The pelourinho's marking at the center of constructed sight lines is reinforced by Codina's choice of aerial perspective. Looking out to the Pará River, Codina's rendering of small commercials vessels and newly-launched Portuguese naval vessels effectively locate the pelourinho's function inside the global commerce of the port, the city's cosmopolitan population, and the imperial authority invested in the architecture of the praça. Rows of covered stalls marked proscribed points of viewing, creating a defined row of viewing points that all point directly to the pelourinho at center. Codina's aerial view, sparse population of the praça, and focus on the covered stalls position the pelourinho as an agent of

[40] AHU, Cartografia (Manuscrita), Caixa 1043, doc. 15799

[41] The images and accounts of Ferreira's expedition, held at the FBN, have been published in a series of different collections. The information and images I relay here are from Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira, *Viagem Filosófica pelas Capitanias do Grão Pará, Rio Negro, Mato Grosso e Cuiabá – 1783-1792* (Rio de Janeiro: Conselho Federal de Cultura, 1971).

surveillance inside the city's theater of power: governmental authority, invested with the power to judge and punish, watches over the locality of the praça and the global commerce of the bay. In this most public setting, Codina renders the pelourinho as the near-literal embodiment of Jeremy Bentham's panopticon: the pelourinho watches over its citizens while maintaining no personal or human presence, yet still marking the proper mode of moving through, and looking at, the city's social order.

The audiences of public spectacles of punishment – the kind actively avoided in representations of pelourinhos – were suspect under Portuguese and Brazilian authorities in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. For the imperial government and upper classes, public tranquility required the potential for unlimited violence to maintain it, while at same time guaranteeing that this unlimited power need never be exercised.[42] To make punished criminals into public examples, it was necessary that legal authorities train the assembled crowd in the proper practices of looking at the scene: to be attentive, passive, and yet devoid of empathy. If the victims of flogging punishments were meant to be set as examples against which to define proper social order and behavior, such behaviors also needed to be internalized in the crowd. Frank Graziano terms this the "strategic theatrics of atrocity," where spectacles of violence actively "engage a population as an audience-guarantor in a system that transforms spectacular atrocity into political power."[43] These strategic theatrics come with a trade-off, one fully known by the government: in the quest to maintain social order, as stated in one royal declaration, public whippings could possibly "give the Public a Theater of Slaughter, which would more likely

[42] Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 92.
[43] Frank Graziano, *Divine Violence: Spectacle, Psychosexuality, & Radical Christianity in the Argentine "Dirty War"* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992), 64.

excite the pity of the people than it would the vengeance of justice."[44] Thus, by creating examples of convicted criminals, the theaters of power for the expression of imperial authority could just as easily become theaters of rebellion. In this way, the public stage provided during the punishment created the possibility that the convict's body, instead of being a personification of social deviance, was instead turned into a focus of empathetic sympathy, turning the crowd to identify with the criminal and against the very social order such punishments were meant to preserve.

The public theaters of whipping spectacles, then, display the spectacular aesthetics of punishment as constituent of the power relations of the city; but at the same time, they are a performative act which encodes the precariousness of the state's own political authority. For this reason, Foucault states, the body was removed from public view in modern executions, as the public spectacle had unintended, and potentially rebellious and destructive, political consequences for the nascent modern nation-state. Foucault understands the audience's relation as an ambiguous one, because to confirm the power of the state and the sovereign, and the validity of the execution, the assembled audience must see it with their own eyes, and in a way, be part of the spectacle. In this way the audience demanded a right to see the execution: as he notes, "there were protests when at the last moment the victim was taken out of sight."[45] But at the same time, "the people, drawn to the spectacle intended to terrorize it, could express its rejection of the punitive power and sometimes revolt."[46] Thus, "it was evident that the great public spectacle of punishment ran the risk of being rejected by the very people to whom it was addressed."[47]

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[44] Aufderheide, *Order and Violence*, 304.
[45] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish,* 58.
[46] Ibid, 59.
[47] Ibid, 63.

As if reading Foucault a century and a half prior to its publication, a set of new laws published in Brazil after independence were focused specifically on the potential of rebellion emerging from the presence, or removal, of the punished subject. Brazilian prison reform movements conveyed a growing suspicion of the effectiveness of large-scale public whippings. Article 179, paragraph 19 of the 1824 Brazilian constitution explicitly prohibited the use of "whippings, torture, hot iron marks, and all other cruel penalties" for all Brazilian citizens.[48] That same year, the pelourinho in Rio de Janeiro – which had been re-installed in the occasion of the exiled Portuguese court's arrival in 1808 – was removed, and the public spectacle of whippings on which both Rio's main praça and the city's legal system had been based effectively ended.[49] In 1830, Brazil established a new criminal and penal code that eliminated public whippings for free men.[50]

The decline and eventual cessation of public whippings for free men during the period of prison and punishment reform in Brazil occurred in tandem with a similar decline in public executions in France and the United States. Foucault ties this to a "slackening of the hold on the body" since "physical pain, the pain of the body itself, [was] no longer the constituent element of the penalty."[51] This slackening, this loss of the body as the constitutive symbol both of punishment and of pain, is most evident in the practices of punishment in twentieth century France. Foucault notes that even the guillotine, still in use in the first decades of the twentieth century, had to be imprisoned, away from public view. In this context, he notes, even the act of

[48] *Constituição Politica do Imperio do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Na Typ. De Flancher, Impressor-Livreiro de Sua Magestade Imperial, 1824), 50.
[49] Luis Gonçalves dos Santos, *Memorias para servir à História do Reino do Brasil*, Vol 1 (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Zelio Valverde, 1943), 93.
[50] Aufderheide, *Order and Violence*, 307.
[51] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 11.

describing the execution was a prosecutable offense, thus "ensuring that the execution should cease to be a spectacle and remain a strange secret between the law and those it condemns."[52]

While the 1824 constitution ended whippings and public torture for citizens, the enslaved were always considered to be exempt from this stipulation.[53] Thus, in the years following Brazilian independence, efforts to keep this "strange secret" precisely that were encoded in the laws passed by the Brazilian government, and confirmed through the findings of Municipal Council of Salvador regarding the punishment of the enslaved. This stipulation was confirmed in the new Brazilian penal code of 1830, which ranked three punishments for slaves: capital punishment for the most severe offenses; service in the galleys for secondary offenses; and whippings (a maximum of fifty per day) for minor infractions.[54]

After the passing of the 1824 constitution, almost all victims whipped in public in Brazilian cities were enslaved black males. Female slaves, who were stereotyped as weaker and less able to sustain punishment, were typically granted other sentences than whippings. The whipping punishment, *o chicote*, was by far the most common sentence for Brazilian slaves throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. An 1826 public record from Rio de Janeiro cites between 100 and 400 lashes as common for misdemeanor crimes, with a total of 330,400 lashes administered in the city in that year alone.[55] Self-emancipated or runaway slaves were either punished with whippings, or returned to their masters for punishment – usually the same

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[52] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 15.

[53] For a thorough analysis of the legal impact of the 1824 constitution on the enslaved in Brazil, especially in terms of punishment, see Agostinho Marques Perdigão Malheiro, *Escravidão No Brasil: Ensaio histórico-jurídico-social*, 2 vols (São Paulo: Edições Cultura, 1944). A condensed version of Perdigão Malheiro's thoughts in essay form is reproduced in document 6.1, "'This Dark Blotch on Our Social System: An Analysis of the Legal Status of Slaves and Freedmen in Brazilian Society (1866)" in Robert Edgar Conrad (ed.), *Children of God's Fire: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 237-245.

[54] *Colecção das leis do Imperio do Brasil de 1830* (Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia Nacional, 1876), 150-153; 163, 177. As reprinted in Conrad, *Children of God's Fire*, 253.

[55] "Lashes Inflicted upon slaves at the Jail (*Calabouço*) in Rio de Janeiro (1826)," in Conrad, *Children of God's Fire*, 302.

physical result on a plantation, simply without the façade of state intervention in urban prisons.[56] Hardly ever did slave crimes reach the courts, and even if they did, slaves rarely went to prison, typically undergoing gallery servitude or quarry work.

In 1829, same year as the Salvador prison commission report, slaves composed only 29% of the prison population in Bahia. This statistic is misleading: slaves made up a small proportion of inmates because their punishments were the majority of those administered. Slaves faced the possibility of extralegal punishments (which were outlawed for free citizens), and also faced the frequent possibility of being transported to prisons to receive punishments as authorized by their owners.[57] Even then, the 29% that were actually jailed were awaiting whipping sentences for judicial crimes, but for which they were not directly responsible. Most enslaved jailed men and women were being prosecuted or punished for crimes committed on their master's bidding.[58]

While in the early years of the empire fear of slave rebellions and suspicion of public punishments were tolerated as trade-offs for social tranquility, after 1830 public whippings of slaves came to be viewed as potential animators of the Bahia rebellions.[59] The legalization of slave punishment as outlined in the 1824 constitution and the 1830 penal code was enacted in direct response to Brazil's ongoing fear and legacy of slave rebellions. Article 113 of the 1830 penal code defined the crime of "insurrection . . . as having been committed when twenty or more slaves have combined to take their freedom by means of force."[60] The penalties are as follows: death for the revolt leaders; galley service for moderate and minor participants; and "for

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[56] Aufderheide, *Order and Violence*, 333.
[57] Ibid, 319.
[58] Ibid, 316.
[59] Emilia Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 134-135.
[60] *Colecção das leis do Imperio do Brasil de 1830* (Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia Nacional, 1876), 150-153; 163, 177. In Conrad (ed.), *Children of God's Fire*, 253.

all others – lashes."[61] The efficacy of this new definition of insurrection and its penalties were tested soon after, when the Malê Rebellion began at dawn on 25 January 1835. A group of nearly six-hundred men, almost all African-born, directly confronted the Salvador's authorities with clubs and knives in an attempt to overcome the city's security forces, head to the Recôncavo to gather more participants from plantations, and finally lay siege to Salvador.[62] But the revolt was short-lived: Guilhermina Rosa de Souza, a freed slave, informed officials of the plot, which was suppressed in only a few hours due to a swift response by Bahia's police force. The Malê Rebellion still provoked a flurry of legal and cultural responses throughout Brazil, all aimed at further preventing slave rebellions. One of these was to limit the public visibility of the punishments of the convicted participants. For the Malês who were not executed,

> Floggings were held at two different sites [in Salvador]: the Campo da Pólvora and the cavalry garrison at Água de Meninos . . . At times the authorities worried that these public spectacles would themselves disturb the peace. [Malê leader] Alufá Licutan's sentence to one thousand lashes would be carried out in public, 'but not on the streets of the city.'[63]

Even in the wake of his community's devastating loss, Alufá Licutan's visual power remained: while still insisting on floggings as punishment, Bahia's government was careful not to let Licutan's whipping become a public spectacle. In further response to the rebellion, on June 10, 1835, Emperor Pedro II signed the so-called "Extraordinary Law" which extended the list of crimes for which the death penalty was applicable, re-confirmed the necessity of whippings for

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[61] *Colecção das leis do Imperio do Brasil de 1830* (Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia Nacional, 1876), 150-153; 163, 177. In Conrad (ed.), *Children of God's Fire*, 253.

[62] João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

[63] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 218; APEB, "Devassa do levante de escravos ocorrido em Salvador em 1835." *Anais do Arquivo do Estado da Bahia* 38 (1968): 53.

"light" offenses, and severely limited the ability of the enslaved to testify in court or appeal their sentences.[64]

Legal responses to limit the audience for punishment of the enslaved in wake of the Bahia rebellions were not only done out of a desire to limit future rebellions, but also for lawmakers to avoid being exposed to the horrors of punishment. In addition to the 1829 recommendations to limit the whippings of slaves from view, on July 21, 1835, Salvador's municipal council approved a request "to not inflict corporal punishment of whipping slaves or others in the courtyard of the public jail, since such acts disturb the working hours of employees in this office, and this House, since they are degrading to hear, during the sessions the wailing of the punished."[65] The request passed unanimously. The same council that would oversee the execution of such punishments at the request of slave masters not only disavowed itself from sight, as in the 1829 request, but from even hearing that such whippings took place.

Thus there is an acknowledgement of the fact of personal empathy in whippings; the precise personal empathy that was so assiduously avoided until this point in the public audience. Even lawmakers acknowledge its presence and the double bind it catches them in: the criminals whose whippings they have authorized have a profound personal impact, and to eliminate it, they must be eliminated from sight and mind. The move essentially legalizes their right to disavow the burden of empathy and the burden of description outlawed in France a century later. In a situation rife with the potential for their own empathy – and all the contradictions that entails – they have outlawed their own affect.

On September 7, 1835, the Salvador municipal council took the unprecedented measure of dismantling the city's most visible marker of public whippings as they voted to remove the

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[64] *Colecção das leis do Imperio do Brasil de 1835* (Rio de Janeiro: Tipografia Nacional, 1864), 5. In Conrad (ed.), *Children of God's Fire*, 254.
[65] AHM, Atas da Camara Municipal 1835-1838, July 21 1835, p. 43v.

city's pelourinho which had been in place since the sxiteenth century.[66] As outlined in the previous section, this decision was partly in response to an ongoing suspicion of public whippings as potential motivators of slave rebellions. But it was also a decision made to navigate the racial and gendered politics of public spectacles, to eliminate the possibility of an animating empathetic identification against the government. In the next section I trace the navigation of racial and gendered politics of voyeurism and empathy further through the work of British and French travelers in Brazil in the 1820s and 1830s, before returning to an analysis of Chagas' *Cristo na Coluna* and the 1835 pelourinho removal request as forming a rebellious, counter-representational system of the violated slave body.

Codifying Empathy and Voyeurism in Brazilian Travel Narratives

For Foucault, modern executions are bound in a double process where the "loss of spectacle is tied to the elimination of pain."[67] The ongoing necessity of slavery as a political and economic basis for the future of the Brazilian nation-state continued the violent punishments of slaves in prison courtyards, and public praças. These remained important government rituals, yet were even more inscribed with rebellious possibilities of viewership, particularly in light of the Haitian Revolution and its accompanying fear of global slave rebellion. This produced conflicting notions of imprisonment and punishment. While the law was the incitement for the spectacle – as Robert M. Cover has suggested, "neither legal interpretation nor the violence it occasions may be properly understood from one another" – enslaved bodies were placed outside the law.[68] The enslaved continued to be punished according to the wishes of their overseers or

[66] Alberto Silva, *A Cidade d'El Rei: Aspectos Seculares* (Salvador: Publicação da Diretoria do Arquivo Divulgação e Estatistica da Prefeitura Municipal de Salvador, 1953), 93-94.
[67] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 10, 11.
[68] Robert M. Cover, "Violence and the Word." *The Yale Law Journal* 95:8 (July 1986), 1601.

masters except in the most heinous circumstances when government intervention and trials were necessary. In other words, despite a conscious legal move to reform prison systems of punishment, the state was simply used to enact the master's decision in this matter, and so control over the body of the slave was torn between their master and the state.[69]

These political ideologies converge and produce a new trend in the representation of public whipping spectacles in print culture. Following the arrival of travelers in Brazil immediately after independence, almost all representations of whippings are produced by Europeans in illustrated travel narratives. These consistently focus on slavery in prison courtyards or public praças, and almost all include images of witnesses in public situations. These images explicitly navigate interpersonal dynamics of affect and empathy by inflecting voyeurism with homoerotic language. Thus, at the moment Brazil's legal system reduces the public visibility of slave punishment as public spectacle, its representation increases in the biographies of urban centers.

In a system where punishment for enslaved persons was explicitly extralegal, its excesses of violence are not necessarily distinguishable from the excesses of its reproduction or its representation. By 1820, it was nearly a requirement for Europeans visiting Brazil to witness a slave whipping and comment upon it. The excessive punishments levied against enslaved captives were deliberately and systematically traced by European travelers in Brazil. What emerges, as Saidiya Hartman has noted, is a situation where the questions of desire and repulsion emerging from the trauma of slavery are not necessarily separable. [70] The ambiguous natures of pain and pleasure relayed in these travel narratives and their visual representations converge as a

[69] Aufderheide, *Order and Violence*, 293.
[70] Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 78.

technique of discipline – punishment itself – morphs into pleasure as a technique of personal and social transformation and re-imagination.

Consider the following paragraph, penned in 1821 by James Henderson, a British traveler in Rio de Janeiro:

> On [his] name being called several times, he appeared at the door of a dungeon, where negroes seem to be promiscuously confined together. A rope was put around his neck, and he was led to a large post, in the adjoining yard. . . The black *degredado* set to work very mechanically, and at every stroke, which appeared to cut part of the flesh away, he gave a singular whistle . . . On receiving the first and second strokes he called out '*Jesu*,' but afterwards laid his head against the side of the post, uttering not a syllable, or asking for mercy; but what he suffered was strongly visible in the tremendous agitation of the whole frame.[71]

The paragraph suggests language to be an inadequate vehicle for emotion, as Henderson displaces speech onto an image: "What he suffered was strongly visible . . . in the whole frame." Describing the scene as a framed image blurs of the line between image and text. Henderson's voyeurism is wrapped simultaneous desire and disavowal of a homoerotic connection that goes unfulfilled, as the slave's body is rendered as a site for the pure infliction of pain and the "promiscuous" sexuality of male bodies in close proximity. It is telling, then, how the paragraph notes the slave's calling of the name of Jesus. Marcus Wood has argued images of violated enslaved bodies in nineteenth-century abolitionist visual culture frequently invoke the specter of a brutalized Christ, as the identification of Christ on a cross with the slave on a pelourinho shows how the enslaved body's capacity to take in pain elevates it to the level of Christ, and makes the

[71] James Henderson, *A History of the Brazil: Comprising Its Geography, Commerce, Colonization, Aboriginal Inhabitants, &c* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1821), 72-73. "Degredado" can be defined as "convict," "exile," or "outcast." I choose not to translate it here because all three terms apply in this situation.

viewer envious of the position of pain.[72] Thus, to be called as part of the audience is to oscillate between voyeurism and empathy, between erotic desire and repulsion, here rendered as a form of masochistic visuality: an "agitation" confined to the "frame" of the whipping spectacle. This interplay between image and text, desire and repulsion, empathy and voyeurism, will emerge as a hallmark of the multivalent and contradictory modes of representation of the whipping spectacle that emerge in this period, specifically in the work of Johann Mortiz Rugendas and Jean-Baptiste Debret.

In a lithograph entitled *Punitions publiques sur la place Ste. Anne* ("Public punishments in the Campo de Santana"), Bavarian artist Johann Moritz Rugendas relays his vision of a public whipping of an enslaved man in Rio de Janeiro (Figure 2.7). The print is part of a set of one hundred lithographs of Brazilian landscapes, daily life, and slave society, published in his *Voyage Pittoresque dans le Brésil* in Paris in a series of installments between 1827 and 1834.[73] Rugendas was a staunch abolitionist, a point he tried to convey through his images.[74] Rugendas' vision shows a male slave, hands tied above his head, as he stands nearly immobilized attached to a pelourinho in the Campo de Santana. His buttocks exposed and back turned toward the crowd, with a grimaced look he braces for the first crack of the whip on his skin. The punisher's wide eyes indicate both his eagerness and reluctance to carry out the punishment. The person charged with carrying out the flogging was typically, as illustrated here, a male slave. As the assembled public looks on, it was necessary to ensure those of enslaved status were participating in the continued dispensing of justice. But the choice is not his: at far left and right, his overseers

[72] Marcus Wood, "Slavery, empathy, and pornography in John Gabriel Stedman's *Narrative of a Five Years Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam*," in *Slavery, Empathy, and Pornography*, 87-140.
[73] Johann Moritz Rugendas, *Voyage pittoresque dans le Brésil* (Paris: Engelmann, 1835).
[74] Robert W. Slenes, "African Abrahams, Lucretias and Men of Sorrows: Allegory and Allusion in the Brazilian Anti-slavery Lithographs (1827-1835) of Johann Moritz Rugendas." *Slavery & Abolition* 23:2 (2002): 149.

sit looking on, regarding the violence of the punishment and ensuring it is carried out to their specifications.

Who does Rugendas want us to see seeing the whipping? This is a public spectacle with a diverse crowd amassed to witnesses the public flogging, as it goes on without beginning or end. This ambiguity of time reveals itself in the forms of two men; one in the foreground, his body nearly broken from already having received the punishment, the other in the background, resisting his movement toward the post. The crowd's large numbers are accentuated by their huddled proximity to the whipping post and the agitation in their bodies. Our vision is directed by attendees of all racial categories: a free black couple (shown by their long coats and top hat), at left, lean forward regarding the scene as two soldiers, sitting on a box in front of them, point forward. Rugendas relays a vision of an audience that not only asks everyone to see, but ensures they are seen seeing. The crowd blends together, with persons of African and European descent looking on the scene, from a veritable slice of Rio de Janeiro society, male and female: urban slaves, members of the Brazilian military, merchants, priests, wealthy members of the upper class in their coaches, and free laborers.

For all the potential and implied violence in this scene, it is telling that Rugendas chooses not to show any actual scarring or blood. The back of the already beaten slave faces away from us, so we cannot see; while the other two are yet to receive their punishments. As the presence of these bodies enacts an assembly line of whippings, the viewer is saddled with the responsibility to end the spectacle. In this way, the image seeks to imbue the position of audience with the position of power. This print thrusts forward the subjectivity of the spectator, and confronted with the ambiguities of the position, forces a choice to cheer on the whippings, or stop them altogether by identifying with Rugendas' abolitionist stance.

Bonapartian court painter Jean-Baptiste Debret did not share Rugendas' political views. A staunch defender of Brazil's slavery system, Debret published his *Voyage Pittoresque dans le Brésil*, an extensively illustrated account of his stay in Brazil between 1816 and 1831, in three volumes between 1834 and 1839.[75] Debret's works are some of the most-commonly reproduced scenes of nineteenth century Brazilian life, figuring prominently in art histories of Brazil and playing a major discursive role in the formation of Brazilian national identity through the twentieth century. Surprisingly little attention has been paid to a critical examination of his works, and even less on the relationship between the images and text in his work.[76] *Voyage Pittoresque*, particularly in its second volume, uses extensive illustrations and textual descriptions to relay Debret's views on slavery, public space, and the visibility and politics of race in Brazilian urban centers.

One of Debret's primary interests in his account is illustrating multiple forms of punishment against slaves, as well as objects used to carry out that torture. Debret opens his discussion by noting that though Brazil is "the part of the New World in which the negro is treated with the most humanity," in his view the Portuguese penal code necessitated public whippings to maintain order in such a large population of slaves.[77] Plate 45 in the second volume of *Voyage Pittoresque*, entitled *L'execution de la Punition du Fouet* ("Execution of the Punishment of the Whip") presents Debret's vision of the public whipping of a series of male slaves (Figure 2.8).

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[75] Jean-Baptiste Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique au Brésil.* 3 vols. (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, Imprimeurs de l'Institute de France, 1834, 1835, and 1839).

[76] Darlene J. Sadlier, *Brazil Imagined: 1500 to the Present* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), 113-114. See also Julio Bandeira and Pedro Corrêa do Lago, *Debret e o Brasil: Obra Completa* (São Paulo: Editora Capivara, 2007); and especially Marcus Wood's recent penetrating analysis of Debret's work: Marcus Wood, "Slavery and the Romantic Sketch: Brazilian Cornucopia, American Aporia," in *Black Milk: Imagining Slavery in the Visual Cultures of Brazil and America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 27-70.

[77] Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque*, Vol 2, 139.

Debret's description of this print provides one of the most contradictory perspectives on public whippings produced by a European in Brazil. "Poles of correction," as he refers to them, are "planted in all the most frequented squares of [Rio de Janeiro]," speaking as if the wooden poles in squares like the Campo de Santana were seeded, watered, and grew from the ground in an effort to re-landscape the very social order of the city. Debret describes the whippings as happening "almost every day" between the hours of 9 and 10 am, with "the castigated" led from the prison to the whipping post, and then back to the prison after. In his lithograph, the whipping punishment carried out by a slave on a slave is watched by numerous onlookers in a circle surrounding the pelourinho. But this crowd is quite different from Rugendas'. The punished victim's face turned away, the ropes pulled tightly on his body, reduces him to a strong, enfleshed representation of buttocks which form the central aspect of the scene. Debret's portrayal of the assembled crowd consists almost entirely of slaves. The masses have faded into the background, their faces unreadable and distant. The only ones who are seen, and those who are seen seeing, are those intimately related to the spectacle itself: those about to be whipped, those who have been whipped, and those who are ensuring the punishment is carried out. Four slaves, at left, await their turn on the pelourinho; behind them, two guards stand in attendance, their gazes looking down to the ground as the *degredado* prepares to strike; and two more men, lying on the ground next to the pelourinho, lie on their stomachs, waiting for their wounds to heal.

I suggest that the distinction between Rugendas' and Debret's vision of the crowd is based on their differing political motivations. For Rugendas, his print in many ways acknowledges that all the citizens of Brazil are seen as part of the audience of the whipping spectacle, and that they are *seen* seeing. As such, it is impossible to remain a passive voyeur in

the midst of such a violent spectacle. Rugendas, by producing a print that allows members of the crowd to see themselves being seen while seeing the whipping, attempts to reconcile the voyeurism of their audience's participation in the spectacle with its violent effects. Rugendas seems to hope this contradiction will result in viewers adopting an abolitionist stance against the continued whippings of Brazilian slaves. For Debret however, the effect is the opposite: reducing the crowd only to those directly involved in the whipping, also reduces its impact as a public spectacle, and thus the visibility of the public crowd. This, in turn, disassociates the spectacle from its own spectacularity, positioning it as a necessary part of a necessary slavery system, and one that no one should be singled out for viewing.

By contrast, Debret's textual and visual depictions do little to show the actual effects of whipping. Instead, Debret alludes to it with the constant repetition of potential violence: a series of whips and replacements at lower left, at the ready as soon as the current one becomes too loose with wetness from blood; two men laying on the ground, already having received the punishment; and the line of convicted men at back left, waiting their turn on the pelourinho. The mere counting of whips, the counting of bodies, the counting of human beings as part of an assembly line of whippings, for Debret highlights what Hartman terms "the terror of the mundane and the quotidian." [78] Debret describes it thusly:

> The left side of the scene is occupied by the *band of convicts*, situated with head to the *pole* on which completes the executor gives the forty or fifty lashes ordered. One readily finds that of all the assistants, more attentive to the number of strokes which are distributed, are the two negroes who are at the ends of the group awaiting the correction, because they are typically for one or the other to replace

[78] Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 4.

> the patient that you send to . . . the *correction pole*, so one sees their head is lowered again, as the number of strokes is increasing.[79]

In such a spectacular scene of violence, one of the great terrors inflicted on the castigated is the forced act of counting, not by order, but by circumstance. Forced to stand and watch, the recitation of numbers is itself an act of mental torture: recited verbally, counted internally, the act only serves to make the violence more present. As they look on, as the assigned number grows ever closer, they lower their heads, in acknowledgement of the number that, Debret seems to assume, will forever be in their memories. But the slave charged with whipping the victim also must count – both because he is ordered to as a servant of the justice system, and because he knows, some day, he may be the one lashed to the pole. In the midst of this potential exchange of positions, where the punisher can so easily become the punished, Debret focuses on the "character" of the castigated prisoner:

> At this pole of pain that one judges the character of the whipped negro, and the nuances of irritability of his temperament, generally nervous. There are even examples of *changes* in the execution of the number of lashes ordered, due to the exhaustion of the will of too impressionable an individual . . . It is there too, albeit tightly bound, as the drawing indicates, that their pain gives him the energy to rise on tiptoe, every time he receives it; the twitch is reiterated so many times, that the friction of the stomach and upper thighs of the victim leaves a sweat mark on the post that is polished at this height; the sinister imprint is found on each of these high posts in public places. . . But some of those convicted (and these are to be expected), displayed a strong character, suffering in silence, until the last boost. [80]

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[79] Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque*, Vol 2, 140. Emphases in original.
[80] Ibid.

"Suffering in silence." For Debret, the ultimate mark of "character" for a human being whose humanity has been defined by the infliction of pain is that they do not, can not, speak of it. Working against Elaine Scarry's often-cited formulation of pain as a destroyer of language, Debret seems to suggest that it should be possible to speak in the midst of such pain.[81] There have been others, Debret suggests, that spoke up in the midst of their punishments to demand its cessation, to speak about "the exhaustion of will." For Debret, the marker of slave character, the only sign of their humanity in the midst of such a spectacle, the only thing to potentially analogize them with the free citizens who are not subjected to such tortures, is, ironically and nefariously, that they should silently endure and never speak of it. As Marcus Wood has so cogently summarized, "To claim the right to describe the experience of the tortured slave is to proclaim access to this experience."[82] Debret speaks for this experience through a lens of constant judgement at the slave's ability to take in pain, at their manifestation of humanity defined through terroristic violence: to follow Saidiya Hartman's logic, the "truncated nature" of the slave as person worked to promote chattel status for enslaved persons by signifying personhood through the pained body.[83] Through Scarry's observation that Debret's excessive use of agency allows his voice to be translated onto the slave's body which he insists must remain silent.[84] As the slave's embodiment confirms the terror, the legal punishment necessitated that the enslaved be totally visible and on display, at the same time completely displaced and invisible.

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[81] Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 14. "The failure to express pain will always work to allow its appropriation and conflation with debased forms of power; conversely, the successful expression of pain will always work to expose and make impossible that appropriation and creation."
[82] Wood, *Blind Memory*, 219.
[83] Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 93-94.
[84] Scarry, *The Body in Pain*, 14.

The sexualized, arguably homoerotic connotations of Debret's reading of the whipping punishment provide another interpretive path to read the intersections of looking codes, race, gender, and violence. As Debret notes, the public praças of Rio de Janeiro contain one ghostly, haunting marker: the silent, forced repetition of the friction of nude bodies against them, the poles polished with sweat. If Debret understands the whippings as necessary, and judges the potential character of the victims based on their silence, then he also judges as best those that most effectively, and unwillingly, polish the poles clean with their bodies, uttering not a word. The sadomasochistic reading of Debret I am forwarding here continues after the cessation of the public spectacle. While Debret presents himself as a distant spectator present only for the public aspect of the whipping punishment, he also takes care to describe what happens to the castigated in the prison following their whipping:

> Back in prison, the patient is subjected to a second test no less painful, it is the filling of the wound with spiced vinegar, a sanitizing operation that prevents the cuts from festering. It furthermore important, if the negro is very nervous, to be bled immediately; [this is] a strict precaution one takes on all black women.[85]

This intentional piercing of black women's bodies without their consent mirrors Saidiya Hartman's observation on the limits of humanity for female slaves defined through rape and consent in the southern United States. As enslaved women were legally unable to grant sexual consent, they carried the constant presumption of consent and willingness.[86] At the same time, the enslaved woman in Debret's reading who endured forced piercing or whipping were placed in such a situation precisely because they were deemed criminally liable for their actions. In

[85] Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque*, Vol 2, 139.
[86] Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 81.

other words, the enslaved had a choice about their criminality, but not their sexual consent.[87] Here, Debret again reveals the distinction in gender encoded in Brazil's slave codes, necessitating the differential treatment of female slaves required in the 1829 Bahia prison commission report. But it furthermore speaks to the continued associations of females with weakness, ironically contrasted, in this instance, to the pain endured by the whipping treatment. Forcefully pierced both by a system of looks constructed on an uneasy male homoeroticism and a knife meant to bleed their own bodies, here, the enslaved female body is immediately branded as nervous and incapable for its supposed inability to sustain the whipping punishment and its immediate effects.

The bleeding, the continued piercing of bodies reflects back to Debret's recounting of the "sanitizing operation" of the spiced vinegar. The benevolence of the sanitizing operation to heal the slave's wounds is coated in another layer of pain, described as at least as horrific as what they have just gone through. Debret's account similarly speaks to Joan Dayan's reading of Père Labat's 1722 Saint-Domingue travelogue, *Nouveau voyage aux iles de l'Amerique*.[88] Dayan notes that Labat recounts the placing of a slave in irons, "but not until he has washed him with a *pimentade*, a 'pickling brine in which you crush red pepper and citrons.' Labat explained that it caused a 'horrible pain to the places the whip had flayed, but it is a certain cure for gangrene that inevitably comes from these wounds.'"[89] Dayan summarizes this cruel irony of the nefariousness of punishment and benevolence as legalized in the *Code Noir*:

> "In the specific kind of reduction and evisceration of humans outlined in the Code, nothing, not even 'kindness,' can alleviate the slave's condition. This is the

[87] Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 81.
[88] Père Jean-Baptiste Labat, *Nouveau voyage aux iles de l'Amerique* (Paris: G. Cavelier, 1722).
[89] Joan Dayan, *Haiti, History, and the Gods* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 206; quoting Labat, *Nouveau voyage aux iles de l'Amerique*, Vol 1, 166-167.

> terror . . . You harm, and then you alleviate the harm you have caused: the executioner also gets to be the savior; the benevolence continues the brutalization, while claiming otherwise."[90]

Dayan is hinting at the inseparability of desire and repulsion, of questions of healing and questions of pain. Working through this point, she goes on to read the works of the Marquis de Sade against the provisions of the *Code Noir*, in order to call attention to the ease with which one can link constructions of sexual debasement with legally-established modes of treating human beings. In her analysis, Sade functions as a literalization of the Black Code, as Sade describes so many tortures that would not be out of place in the Code's system of the treatment of black bodies, as well as a record of those practices that exceeded its regulations – both for the benefit of blacks and whites.[91] In the Code, subjection and beneficence were two sides of the same coin: "Flogging and burning, excessive tortures required by the thankless task of controlling the enslaved black majority, came to sound like gratuitous cruelty, an addictive pleasure . . . [These] crimes not only gratified the perverse tastes of those guilty of such crimes, but functioned practically to distinguish masters from slaves."[92] The effort to distinguish masters from slaves does not differentiate, necessarily, those who are affected by the punishment in a circle of desire and repulsion: "Like the chains of Sade's most rigorous libertines, their use on select victims also ensnares the torturers in the glut of labor, duress, and debilitation."[93]

Thus far, I have laid out the problematics of witnessing and the ambiguities of affect that come with a consideration of audience in analyzing the visual culture of slave punishment in Brazil. In all cases, enslaved black bodies emerge as sites for the projection of self contemplation

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[90] Dayan, *Haiti, History, and the Gods*, 206.
[91] Ibid, 212.
[92] Ibid, 215
[93] Ibid, 218.

by a white audience continually confronted with choices of their position as viewer. Paradoxically, it is that precisely that subjectivity which becomes the object of identification, at the very moment the enslaved black body is made the focus of attention. Debret's extended reading of the whipping scene consistently inscribes the slave's humanity in terms of its ability to completely take in, and not speak of, excessive pain; thus displacing the potential empathy of the scene off of the enslaved body and into Debret's analysis of "the strong character" of the silent. Even Rugendas' abolitionist print seems to continually re-inscribe the racial dynamics of power, and in so doing transforms a human body into a specter of suffering, constructed as a viewer's meditation for self-pity at empathetic failure. In this way, the questions and signs of desire, repulsion, and truncated humanity that cross through Rugendas' and Debret's readings of the whipping punishment are, as I have tried to demonstrate, moderated and constructed through proscribed and re-inscribed codes of looking at enslaved bodies, coded through legal distinctions and looking practices of nineteenth century Brazil. In the context of this pervasive and oppressive symbolic system, what aesthetic strategies does one use to critique, even dismantle, the representation of the enslaved body as defined through publicly-sanctioned violent spectacle? How does one provide an image that seeks to counter-witness the very spectacles of subjection it was created to serve?

Counter-witnessing: Dangerous Looking and the Resistant Spectator

In his analysis of J.M.W. Turner's 1840 painting, *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhon Coming On* (Figure 2.9), Ian Baucom notes that, confronted with the problem of representing the 1781 *Zong* massacre, Turner employs a unique representational strategy. The painting effectively crosses the lines of both specific event and abstract representation, with the

end goal of using that interplay to elicit sympathy while at the same time call to action the witness against the prevailing currents of history.[94] The view from the window of the *Zong* massacre, Baucom says, produces humanity itself as a testamentary effect of bearing witness to the massacre.[95] In this way, the effort to bear witness to a particular event and to bear witness *as such* are not necessarily in opposition; rather, it is to anticipate and undermine the actions and reactions of the disinterested, imperial, homogenous state.[96]

In looking at the whipping punishment in Brazil's public praças, in looking – or not looking – at the whipping punishment and its excesses of violence carried out in the sequestered anterooms of unreformed prisons, I want to ask what types of witnessing, and what types of performative representations of witnessing, can call to action and work against the prevailing social order and the historical currents they sustain. Brazil's established codes of looking legally severed the enslaved from humanity while continuing to blur the lines between enslavement and freedom. These codes also defined blackness in relation to criminality, violent spectacle, enslavement, pain, and voyeuristic subjection. In this oppressive symbolic and representational system, I argue that the representation of such scenes *by* the enslaved, *by* the subjects of punishment, was itself an act of rebellion. Here, the act of looking contains the socially subversive possibility of crossing boundaries of representation and social space. Proper ways of looking were defined through codes of race, gender, and sexuality. But looking was also an act of political subversion and rebellion when these codes were disobeyed. In turn, this necessitated the careful regulation of the spaces of spectacle, and furthermore the way such spaces were

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[94] Ian Baucom, *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 274. Baucom's groundbreaking work analyzes the documents around the *Zong* massacre of 1781, when Liverpool-based slavers threw 133 enslaved men and women overboard the slave ship *Zong* and then demanded insurance money on their lost cargo. Baucom permanently locates the historical past of black Atlantic slavery and counter-modernity in a modern, and present, system of speculative finance capital, formed through the cultural politics of cosmopolitan witnessing.

[95] Ibid, 201-202.

[96] Ibid, 305.

represented. Cultural rebellion of the enslaved was, in this context, an act of re-representation of violence, performed in the visuality of the interactions, and the mutual constitutions, of the audience and the body of the condemned.

"In the ceremonies of the public execution," Foucault argues, "the main character was the people, whose real and immediate presence was required for the performance."[97] I wish to interrogate the necessity of the "real and immediate presence" of the people in reference to a quest for realness and immediacy that seemed to be the concern of those inflicting and recording the spectacular effects of punishment as a possibility of empathy. In turn, I posit a reading that questions the nature of the real immediacy of audience as a potential move in reading the rebellious power relations inherent to the spectacle. If the "main character" is the people, what questions does that raise about our own relationship to the spectacular aesthetics of suffering, if, when reproduced, the figure necessitates our presence, and regardless of our motivations, the audience is consistently situated as the main character the spectacle? This push consistently affirms the main character of the spectacle as white and heteronormative, rendering the black body invisible, paradoxically, at the moment it is placed on display.

As such, how are we, to restate Saidiya Hartman's provocation, called to participate in scenes of punishment? And what are our ethical obligations in occupying that position? Taking up Hartman's question, Diana Taylor has insisted that all spectators be placed squarely within the "frame" of the scene, and as such, questions of positionality, audience, and ethical responsibility are not mutually distinguishable.[98] Taylor has advocated for the "politically vital" role of the "responsible and educated witness. Rather than act like 'good', quiet audience members who willingly suspend their disbelief, I am endorsing the part of the resistant

[97] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 57.
[98] See Diana Taylor, "Scenarios of Discovery: Reflections on Performance and Ethnography" in *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 53-79.

spectator."[99] Taylor analyzes how the process of identification-building is structured into spectacles of violence, and encourages witnesses to be passive (feminized, in her reading), in identifying with the protagonists, and going through a process she terms "percepticide" whereby witnesses had to deny that which they saw (lest the violence be turned on them). "What happens to the 'witness,'" she asks, "in a situation that forces people to participate in the production of denial?"[100] Thus, Taylor encourages a practice of responsible witnessing: "Without letting the culprits off the hook, it is vital to recognize that we participate in creating the environment in which certain acts become thinkable, even admissible."[101]

The construction of spectacle legalizes and codifies certain practices of looking. Thinking with those practices is the foundation of the political field on which spectacles of violence are performed.[102] Thinking against them, however, is the basis of rebellious aesthetics. How then, do we understand our ethical responsibility? Moreover, how did the victims and enslaved audience members of the whipping punishment, confronted with that same situation, understand their own ethical stances as witnesses? And how, in a social system that denied them most output for speech or creative expression, were those ethical responsibilities expressed? I suggest that this question matters just as much for contemporary scholars as it did for Francisco das Chagas, as it did for Salvador's Municipal Council. I am arguing that the continued interrogation of the ethical responsibilities of witnessing, read through the racialized and gendered structures of power in which they were developed, carry a palpable trans-historical relevance.

Conceiving of ethical responsibilities of witnessing and counter-witnessing must be predicated on locating and situating the personal and collective histories of the witness, and

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[99] Diana Taylor, *Disappearing Acts: Spectacles of Gender and Nationalism in Argentina's "Dirty War"* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 22.
[100] Ibid, 124.
[101] Ibid, 259.
[102] Ibid, 23.

understanding how those historical positions navigate competing regimes of vision. Navigating competing codes of looking has been a continual, yet woefully understudied, trend in histories of rebellions in African slave colonies in the Americas. In his novel *El Reino de Este Mundo*, Cuban author Alejo Carpentier relates the scene of the 1758 public execution by burning of the Vodou *houngan* (male priest) and revolt leader François Mackandal in Saint-Domingue, and with it an explicitly racialized division in the witnessing of violence and death:

> Macandal was now lashed to the post. The executioner had picked up an ember with the tongs. With a gesture rehearsed the evening before in front of a mirror, the Governor unsheathed his dress sword and gave the order for the sentence to be carried out. The fire began to rise toward the Mandingue, licking his legs. At that moment Macandal moved the stump of his arm, which they had been unable to tie up, in a threatening gesture which was none the less terrible for being partial, howling unknown spells and violently thrusting his torso forward. The bonds fell off and the body of the Negro rose in the air, flying overhead, until it plunged into the black waves of the sea of slaves. A single cry filled the square:
>
> 'Macandal saved!'
>
> Pandemonium followed. The guards fell with rifle butts on the howling blacks, who now seemed to overflow the streets, climbing towards the windows. And the noise and screaming and uproar were such that very few saw that Macandal, held by ten soldiers, had been thrust head first into the fire, and that a flame fed by his burning hair had drowned his last cry. When the slaves were restored to order, the fire was burning normally like any fire of good wood, and the breeze blowing from the sea was lifting the smoke toward the windows where more than one lady

> who had fainted had recovered consciousness. There was no longer anything more to see.[103]

The confirmation of the death of the accused, that final act of certainty in public spectacles of execution, has no place in Carpentier's reading. The enslaved Africans who had assembled to witness Mackandal's execution instead witnessed only his escape. The pandemonium that followed illustrated that the intended confirmation of death as symbolic of state authority was, instead, proof of the slaves' active position as spectators, proof of their right to counter-witness this public execution, to rebel against proscribed codes of looking that were meant to guarantee their passivity. In the raucous aftermath of Mackandal's escape, the possibility of spectacle, the construction of visuality itself, was impossible: "There was no longer anything more to see."

In the opening scene of her story collection *Create Dangerously: The Immigrant Artist at Work*, Edwidge Danticat tells the scene of the public, state-sanctioned execution of Marcel Numa and Louis Drouin, two young men engaged in guerilla conflict against the Duvalier regime, in Port-au-Prince on November 12, 1964. Danticat begins by noting that on that day a "huge crowd gathered to witness an execution."[104] The assembly was forced: the regime had closed schools, bused in witnesses from the countryside, and in so doing had essentially the forced conversion of the populace into spectators at the ritual of state violence. Danticat spends three pages describing the scene: Numa's and Drouin's bodies; their glasses; the erection of the pine posts in the square. Then, jarringly, Danticat writes "Time is slightly compressed on the copy of the film I have and in some places the images skip. There is no sound."[105] Expecting the reader to switch viewing positions quickly, the execution continues, the scene of the firing squad, the view of when

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[103] Alejo Carpentier, *The Kingdom of this World*, trans. Harriet de Onís (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1957), 51-53.
[104] Edwidge Danticat, *Create Dangerously: The Immigrant Artist at Work* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 1.
[105] Ibid, 3.

"Drouin's glasses fall to the ground, pieces of blood and brain matter clouding the cracked lenses."[106] Danticat's retelling of the execution is a retelling of multiple positions of viewership, grounded in historical and contemporary circumstance. Her narrative structure weaves back and forth between viewing the scene live and viewing the scene through the video, layering representations of distances of land and time to unsettle established notions of positionality and perspective that are bound in the politics of witnessing such public punishments.

Danticat states, "All artists, writers among them, have several stories—one might call them creation myths—that haunt and obsess them. This is one of mine."[107] Danticat's haunting myth is, returning to Baucom's interplay of witnessing a specific event and witnessing *as such*, simultaneously grounded in historical and locational specificity as it navigates multiple angles of vision, memory, and identity. Through this haunting story, she weaves together a simultaneous awareness of what dangers such looking poses to our own bodies, and for the social structure and hegemonic regimes of vision in which those looks take place. Let us be aware, she suggests, of how that system is constructed through representations – through "photographs, newspaper and magazine articles, books, and films" – and how those representations, in turn, create, codify, and resist the experience of viewership of state-sanctioned spectacles of political violence.[108] In response, the Duvalier government had labeled Drouin and Numa (both Haitian-born men who had immigrated to the United States and then returned to fight in the guerilla war) "not Haitian, but foreign rebels, good-for-nothing *blans*."[109] Note, then, the racialized distinction in viewership as so important for Duvalier. In an attempt to invert centuries of racially-defined witnessing at violent state-sponsored spectacles, Duvalier inverts whiteness and blackness in order to continue

[106] Danticat, *Create Dangerously*, 4-5.
[107] Ibid, 5.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid, 7. *Blans* translates to "whites," but Danticat keeps the original Kreyòl in her story.

the very spectacles from which Mackandal escaped in 1758; into which Debret tried to lure us in 1835. It is not that the spectacle was seen differently by different races in the crowd; but the spectacle was to be re-imagined because of the race of those executed. In this system, Danticat suggests, to *create* is tantamount to world-making in the face of death, and artists have no other choice: "This is where writers placed their bets, striking a dangerous balance between silence and art."[110] And in this dangerous balance between silence and art, in this precious position between witnessing and rebelling, in this mode of looking dangerously, in this powerful act of counter-witnessing, it is time now, finally, to return to Francisco das Chagas and *Cristo na Coluna*.

Chagas' *Cristo na Coluna*: Counter-witnessing the Whipping Spectacle

Seeing *Cristo na Coluna* today is no easier a task today than in the eighteenth century. The convent was recently converted into the finest hotel in Salvador's historic center, and the sacristy's doors were locked to the public. As such, *Cristo na Coluna* is accessible only by *jeitinho*: a half hour of pleading with hotel managers and guards, as in my case, produces a series of silent glances, a semi-assuring nod, and a small key to the locked sacristy along with the stipulation to tell no one you were allowed to see the work. Perhaps such secrecy is appropriate given the historical circumstance in which Chagas worked, and, as I want to argue, the multivalent and self-reflective commentary the sculpture provides on the codes of looking outlined thus far. This is a sculpture that asks its viewers to look dangerously across the prevailing codes that dictated whom and how one was to look at the spectacles of violent punishment in Brazil's urban slave centers, in public praças and in prison courtyards.

[110] Danticat, *Create Dangerously*, 10.

Francisco das Chagas' crass nickname, *o Cabra* ("The Goat") serves to mark his body and life history, a deterministic branding he carries through all published analyses of his work. Early records of the term's definition are sparse, but by the 1830s "cabra" referred to a Portuguese colonial racial status, marking a person born of one black and one mulata/o parent.[111] Yet Chagas' nickname is absent in contemporary records of his life, only first appearing in 1911 in Manoel Raymundo Querino's seminal history of Bahian artists.[112] Today, the large sign outside the Third Carmelite Order's church that calls visitors inside to see the beauty of Chagas' *Senhor Morto* refers to him not by name, but only as "the slave," and "O Cabra" (Figure 2.10). This nickname has come to define Chagas' life and work not because of a lack of contemporary sources but because of an excess: his given name, Chagas, "wounds," is as common in Bahia's birth and marriage records as the whippings and violent punishments that similarly overpopulate and over-determine the life histories of enslaved Africans in Brazil. Even by virtue of his name, Chagas' life and work write a counter-history of punishment, an alternate interpretive route through "the excess of violence" that marks the tomb of the archive. The endless repetition of his name obscures his own life history as it animates the lives of so many others. Forming a collective consciousness born through a piercing of the historical record, the wounds reanimate the history of whippings as a history of collective rebellion.

Reading Chagas' life story through the history of the wounded archive; reading *Cristo na Coluna* through a history of looking practices, provides a pathway that acknowledges the

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[111] I take this definition from Luiz Maria da Silva Pinto's *Diccionario da Lingua Portuguesa* (Ouro Preto: Na Typographia de Silva, 1832). In general, "cabra" is considered a derogatory term for a person of mixed ancestry in Brazil; see Kirsten Schultz, *Tropical Versailles: Empire, Monarchy, and the Portuguese Royal Court in Rio de Janeiro, 1808-1821* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 65, n78. In Marcus Wood's analysis of Chagas' work in *Blind Memory,* he translates "cabra" as "the bandit or the nigger or the goat" (263-264), interplaying between animalistic and socially deviant conceptions of blackness I find central to an analysis of Chagas' work.

[112] Manoel Raymundo Querino, *Artistas bahianos; indicações biographicas* (Salvador: A Bahia, 1911), 11. For a full discussion of the historiography of the name, see Maria Helena Ochi Flexor, "Escultura Barroca Brasileira: Questões de Autorias," 9, n17.

excesses of violence of archival histories while imagining a form of their redress through rebellion. Chagas' racial, social, and labor status reveal the complex realities of social life in late eighteenth century Salvador, as well as the strategies Chagas employed in his work to speak both through and past them. Colonial Brazilian society largely imported Portuguese conceptions of artisans, which grouped them with craftsmen and mechanics, squarely under the rubric of manual labor. Of these, sculpture was seen as the lowest ranking in a system that ranked visual arts below other arts, especially the literary.[113] Brazil's expanding colonial labor system allowed a growth in opportunities for artists and craftsmen, especially sculptors. Many of these opportunities were provided to free blacks, though freedom for aesthetic expression was limited, as the majority of commissions were for predetermined figures or scenes as stated by churches and other religious institutions – the wealthiest organizations in Salvador.[114] In Chagas' time black sculptors, in what choice they had, made conscious aesthetic choices that pushed against prevailing hegemonic Catholic aesthetics. Black saints emerged as popular subjects, and even in well-defined commissions like those of Chagas, there were "liminal occasions which dissipated the pressures of an unbearably tense social structure while keeping them firmly under the control of dominant white groups."[115]

This liminality of aesthetic choice extended both to Chagas' labor and racial status. In the existing penal codes of the late eighteenth century, reforming slaves – as opposed to castigating them – was never a goal, as reform typically consisted of teaching new skills in chain gangs. This meant that slaves would have learned a new skill such as manual labor (read: sculpting) thus depriving free laborers of the ability to practice it.[116] In this way, the logic of punishment and

[113] Tania Costa Tribe, "The Mulatto as Artist and Image in Colonial Brazil." *Oxford Art Journal* 19:1 (1996): 70.
[114] Ibid, 73.
[115] Ibid, 74.
[116] Aufderheide, *Order and Violence*, 307.

penal reform in the 1750s was intimately tied to the social value of image production, in that penal institutions consistently questioned that value of penal work in an institution where manual labor was a mark of poverty, racism, and enslavement.[117] While racial status did not equate to enslaved status, it did implicate free men of color in a potential bind, particularly free black sculptors who were already working as manual laborers. They were viewed as consistently problematic in regards to the order of Brazilian society, as they were consistently suspect as potential secret brothers to slaves, and while also essential as the new nation's manual labor force, the very labor they practice was already culturally bound to racial prejudice and enslavement.[118] The work of an identifiable black sculptor like Chagas, both in the time he worked and in contemporary scholarship, emerged as a continually suspect and suitable, even inevitable, location to "reflect on the inequalities of the slave system, comment upon its ambiguities, or connote African cultural and aesthetic values."[119]

What does it mean, then, to read Chagas' backside of darkened, bloody pain in the context of Chagas' own life, and the common spectacle of slave whippings that took place in the public square just outside this convent for nearly three hundred years? To read not only Chagas' own strategic creative impulse as an artist, but how he positioned his sculpture in dialogues with the codes of looking that were only to become more intense over the following decades, bearing witness to the actions of the state? What aesthetic strategies is he using to retake his own position at witness, as victim, and of social status as marked by these categories? As a man born into slavery, and as an African Brazilian continuing to live in this powerful slave society, here Chagas not only expresses the pure and present memory of a whipping punishment if ever inflicted, but the political consequences of the continued public spectacle of whipping

[117] Aufderheide, *Order and Violence*, 310.
[118] Ibid, 305.
[119] Tribe, "The Mulatto as Artist and Image in Colonial Brazil," 72.

punishments in Salvador, like those imagined by Rugendas and Henderson. In 1758, Chagas was emerging out of slavery as a free artist. He carves a backside that, while part of the representation of Christ's body commissioned by the Convent, peels away the flesh to perform an aesthetic subversion and reimagining of the social and political structure of Bahia, and Chagas' place within it. The backside Chagas presents, long hidden from view with its back against the Sacristy's wall, does not resemble a conventional representation of a whipping. This "landscape of pain," to borrow Marcus Wood's terminology once again, is a bulbous layer of bloodied blackness, jarringly contrasted to Christ's white skin.

In this chapter, it has been my goal to illustrate, in the Brazilian context, the intertwined structures of race, gender, sexual attraction, and spectacle that defined public perceptions of blackness. Kay Dian Kriz has noted a similar move the context of the British West Indies, where blackness was consistently represented at the limits of the human. The animalistic racialization of blackness she traces was in many ways defined or codified through its ambivalence of sexual attraction.[120] Perhaps, then, as Wood has suggested, Chagas has intentionally taken the whipping spectacle beyond visuality, beyond representation itself by pushing it to both the limits of the human and the limits of the divine, performing a ghosting commentary of structures and definitions of race, desire, and repulsion. The demarcated region of bloodied blackness of Christ's back in *Cristo na Coluna* appears more as a flaying of skin than a whipping, as if layers of whiteness had been peeled away like a kind of patch or removal that could be re-attached or sewn back on at any moment. In a social and political context that defined the humanity of black slaves by their capacity to endure public spectacles of pain and violence, *Cristo na Coluna* presents the most excessive endurance of pain of a white body pushed into the realm of

[120] Kay Dian Kriz, *Slavery, Sugar, and the Culture of Refinement: Picturing the British West Indies, 1780-1840* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 77, 84, 93.

blackness, presenting the excessive pain and torture on a body – Christ's – which was decreed by God to be designed for it. In this way, Chagas indeed pushes past the boundaries of the human to both the animalistic *and* the divine, through the limits of the visibility of black bodies as well as the limits of the excess of violence inherent to the whipping spectacle.

The importance of *Cristo na Coluna* lies in how it performs a symbolic response to a simultaneously personal and political dilemma that can not be resolved, or even acknowledged, in the real world because its expression is that much more salient in the context of a convent. The enclosed form of the convent, and its population of celibate women, is the antidote to the practices of racialized and gendered looking encoded through the legal documents and visual media that formed my case studies in this chapter. In 1829, the Salvador prison reform commission recommended that women needed to be prevented from seeing nude flesh, and that the members of the commission at the same time needed to be prevented from *seeing* women see the very nude flesh they had legislated to be whipped. However, in the convent, in a cloistered, limited context that was already defined by the invisibility of all nude flesh, Chagas understood that the ability to contemplate the wounds of Christ's body was not only permissible, it was commissioned. The 1829 commission report and the 1830 penal code can be understood as responses to precisely the types of counter-witnessing *Cristo na Coluna* reproduces. The report and the penal code incarnate a colonial male perspective view onto female spectator to try to save women, especially enslaved women, from being exposed to nude flesh and to avoid being seen seeing nude flesh.

As a free black artist Chagas would have understood all sides of this code of looking better than anyone, and in the context of this convent, he found the perfect opportunity to demonstrate how to subvert established forms of representation of whippings as well as the

encoded structures of audience on which they depended. Cloistered, sequestered, unseen by the public, this statue quietly and subversively exposes and remakes the identification of the suffering black body with Christ by exposing the façade of such a comparison. In so doing, it displaces and inverts the false forms of empathetic identification present in Rugendas and Henderson, and unmakes the regimes of visual representation on which the whipping spectacle depends. Chagas, then, understood that invisibility, sequestering, and the limiting of audience were effective political strategies against prevailing social structures. He is, in 1758, inverting the political salience of those forms of occlusion, or "percepticide," as Diana Taylor has termed it, that limit our gaze, that effectively seek to destroy, to borrow Nicholas Mirzoeff's terminology, our "right to look."[121] If, as anthropologist James Scott has argued, the "public transcript" is "a shorthand way of describing the open interaction between subordinates and those who dominate," then Chagas' aesthetic strategy of revolt against established codes of looking, the "hidden transcript . . . that takes place 'offstage,' beyond direct observation by powerholders" and "for a different audience and under different constraints of power," was the very embodiment of looking dangerously, of counter-witnessing.[122] In sum: if Henderson and Rugendas' works were dependent on the impulse to document the whipping punishment, and that documentary impulse led to the false forms of empathetic identification I outlined previously, then Chagas' move to represent without representing, in a sequestered, as opposed to public, location, effectively unmakes that visual regime by willingly rebelling against it.

If, of course, we assign the sculpture to Chagas. So much of the reading I have just relayed, and so many of the readings of *Cristo na Coluna* that unproblematically assign the sculpture to the hand of a named free black artist identified by his crass racial nickname, are

[121] Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011).
[122] James Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 2, 4-5.

over-determined by Chagas' race. As I mentioned previously, free blacks, and especially black manual laborers, were marked by constant social suspicion by both ruling classes and the enslaved; and today, it remains largely present and unquestioned, as Wood, Tribe, and I have already done, to describe the work of any black artist in a colonial context in terms of a commentary on slavery or as a potential dialogue with "African" aesthetic values. Then again, with only Chagas' work as a guide, this ambiguous and even contradictory reading was itself a manifestation of the contradictions of his own racial and social status. Our understanding of his work today underscored his precarious social positioning where he would have been seen as potentially a secret brother to slaves, and thus defining his art as slave art, and allowing us to read a commentary on spectacle, violence, and slavery in the guise of this commonly-commissioned sculpture of Christ. Indeed, while Chagas was a free black artist, his statue is not unique. Nearly every major Catholic church in Salvador has a similar work, an image of Christ bound to a stone column, their whipped backsides hidden from view.

In the space between the excess of documentation that obscures Chagas' life and the paucity of history for *Cristo na Coluna*, the statue emerges as a meditation on the whipping spectacle, performing a strategic rebellion against practices of looking at violated black bodies whose proper practices struggled to be defined in the following years. But it also emerges as a site for contemplation of the ambiguous social position occupied by Chagas, and his relationship to the very codes of looking through which I read *Cristo na Coluna*. European travel accounts and Portuguese and Brazilian colonial representations continually seek to inscribe a strict dynamic of power that made spectacles of violated black bodies both part and parcel of, and even invisible in, in social space; but the visual record emerges as conflicting and contradicted, continually pointing to the faults in this system of regulated visuality, and continually searching

for effective ways of carrying out whipping spectacles in public space until they were destroyed by a second legal request.

The aesthetic strategies central to the production of power structures are conveyed through the manipulation of the dynamics of audience. And it is through such manipulations that images and objects may also sow seeds of resistance and rebellion. *Cristo na Coluna* provides the framework for understanding how, by highlighting the dynamics of audience and the performative spectacle of witnessing, images and objects constantly manipulate and reconfigure the power structures of violence of transatlantic slavery. But this battle over the representation of enslaved bodies in the visual culture of spectacle was the focus of much suspicion for three centuries in central Salvador, and as a result the aesthetic potential of rebellion I have been alluding to thus far became a real revolt in the city streets. By 1835, Bahia had seen thirty different slave revolts in as many years, including the aforementioned Malê Rebellion, the largest mainland slave revolt in the Americas, in January 1835. The city's response to these revolts was to take an extraordinary measure.

On September 7, 1835, the July 2nd Patriotic Society of Bahia submitted a request to the Municipal Council of Salvador that the city's public whipping post, which had stood since 1549, be removed from the Largo do Pelourinho.[123] By 1835, the public whippings that were constantly viewed as suspect by urban officials but still meant to keep the city's large populations of enslaved Africans and free blacks under control were doing just the opposite. Operating under the recommendations of the city's police force, the July 2nd Patriotic Society requested, and was granted, the pelourinho's removal not out of concern for public violence, not to protest the treatment of slaves or the institution of slavery, but because the continued presence of the public

[123] Waldemar Mattos, *Evolução Histórica e cultural do Pelourinho* (Rio de Janeiro: Cia Editora Gráfica Barbero, 1978), 117.

whipping spectacle, and the stone column on which it was carried out, put the city's government and socioeconomic structure in danger. Fearful of another insurrection, police documents express concern that the public spectacle of whipping punishments may lead to the formation of pan-African solidarity coupled with anger at the ruling classes, and thus inspire further rebellions. As such, it was not enough to only stop the whippings in the city center. The pelourinho itself had to be removed.

Information on the final location and removal of Salvador's pelourinho is sparse and contradictory. The original request of the July 2nd Patriotic Society no longer exists. The earliest known record of the request is from 1881, in José Alvares do Amaral's *Resumo Chronologico e Noticioso da Provincia da Bahia* ("Chronological Summary of News of the Province of Bahia"), which notes that

> Was demolished, by order of the Municipality, the *Pelourinho*, that was erected on the top of the ladeira do Rosário da Baixa dos Sapateiros. It was a stonework column, with large bronze rings, to which were tied those sentenced to floggings in colonial times. The patriotic Society - *Dous de Julho* – constituted in this Capital to celebrate the pomp of our political Emancipation, requested, in the name of Liberty, an audience with the Municipal Council against the existence of that degrading instrument, that demeaned civilization in this country, principally after the irons of captivity were freed, and requested the demolition of that opprobrious post, being done by the Council.[124]

What makes the request of the July 2nd Patriotic Society so extraordinary is that it requested not only the cessation of public slave whippings, but also the *removal* of the whipping post itself.

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[124] José Alvares do Amaral, *Resumo Chronologico e Noticioso da Provincia da Bahia, Desde o Seu Descobrimento em 1.500*, 2nd edition (Salvador: Imprensa Official do Estado, 1922), 368–369. "The irons of captivity being freed" is a reference to Brazilian independence in 1822.

Here was an attempt, after three centuries, to remove all possibility of the creation of an audience to retain what little remained of the city's fragile social structure. The three centuries of spectacular punishments administered to enslaved African bodies in that square consistently hacked away at the social structure the punishments were meant to reinforce, with such efforts erupting in 1835 and sending the city into a panic. Through ignoring the potentials of their own representational system, the city allowed it to be controlled externally and ultimately cede control to a powerful black revolt. For Chagas, and all of the enslaved women and men who participated in Bahia's era of revolt, personal relationships to slave violence emerged as the most politically salient and powerful representational forms.

Foucault's opening chapter in *Discipline and Punish* too notes the relationship between public spectacles and revolt. He describes how there has, recently, been a history of prison revolts "against an entire state of physical misery that is over a century old."[125] But they were not revolts, Foucault claims, against the merely material or staffing aspects of the prison; they were against the prison in its "very materiality as an instrument and vector of power; it is this whole technology of power over the body that the technology of the 'soul' – that of the educationalists, psychologists and psychiatrists – fails either to conceal or to compensate, for the simple reason that it is one of its tools."[126] As such, Foucault's history of the present in prisons is simultaneously a history of the structuring of power relations over the body, and the body as constituting the power encoded onto it; but also, implicitly, the material, spectacular, and performative forms of architecture – closed or open – that concretize and render visible the power relations of punishment.

[125] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 29.
[126] Ibid, 30.

The Carmelite Order knew this. For centuries *Cristo na Coluna* was placed in the church with its back against the wall, out of public view. I suggest this was done to imprison the statue's desire to disrupt the structures of power inherent to viewing an image of a whipped slave body. By moving the violence of slavery explicitly to the object of Christ, *Cristo na Coluna* creates a landscape of pain too immediately familiar and identifiable, and through that projection onto the viewer creates a dissonance which effectively undermines the power structures it was created to serve. In sum: for white Brazilians, that back was a powerful and disturbing reminder that the choice between voyeurism and empathy was a false one, as either way the power of spectacle remained in their hands. But for Salvador's diverse community of enslaved and free black Brazilians, this statue was a statement of agency and anger at the public whippings committed in the square just outside this church, and a call to rebellion.

This brings us back to Saidiya Hartman's haunting question: How are we, as historians, called to participate in the reproduction of racial power dynamics through images? As I have tried to show here, our first task is to always be consciously aware of the ways images act and desire their audiences, and to be able to navigate those waters effectively. To do this, we must minimize the impulse to use images of slavery as documentary sources, or discuss them as representations of desires located outside of them. The reproduction of visual culture as a documentary source or representation potentially implicates both authors and viewers in the reproduction of the cultural and racial power dynamics of transatlantic slavery, while also threatening to obscure the powerful legacy of performance, spectacle, and rebellion found through the visual culture of slavery. In short, we must be constantly willing to position ourselves as counter-witnesses against the codes of looking such images created, to be wary of treating images or objects as the sole constituents of a "visual culture of slavery" that remains

distinct from texts. Indeed, I have tried to show that the performance of power and rebellion in slavery's visual culture is produced through the conscious and nuanced manipulation of distinctions of text, object, and image; of viewer, audience, and affect. If our goal is to further understand the role visual culture plays in the active production of race, culture, and the history of slavery, then we must move beyond our use of visual culture as a documentary source, and strive to be counter-witnesses attuned to the ways visual culture manipulates the positionality not only of the audiences for whom it was originally produced, but for ourselves.

Figures to Chapter Two

Figure 2.1
Francisco das Chagas (attributed), *Senhor Morto* (*Cristo Morto*), ca. 1760. Igreja da Ordem Terceira do Carmo, Salvador. Photo: Matthew Francis Rarey, 2012.

Figure 2.2
Francisco das Chagas (attributed), *Cristo na Coluna*, ca. 1760. Museu do Convento do Carmo, Salvador. Photo: Matthew Francis Rarey, 2012.

Figure 2.3
Francisco das Chagas (attributed), *Cristo na Coluna*, ca. 1760. Detail of back. Museu do Convento do Carmo, Salvador. Photo: Matthew Francis Rarey, 2012.

Figure 2.4
Pelourinho of Mariana, Minas Gerais, Brazil. Constructed 1750; removed 1871; reinstalled 1970

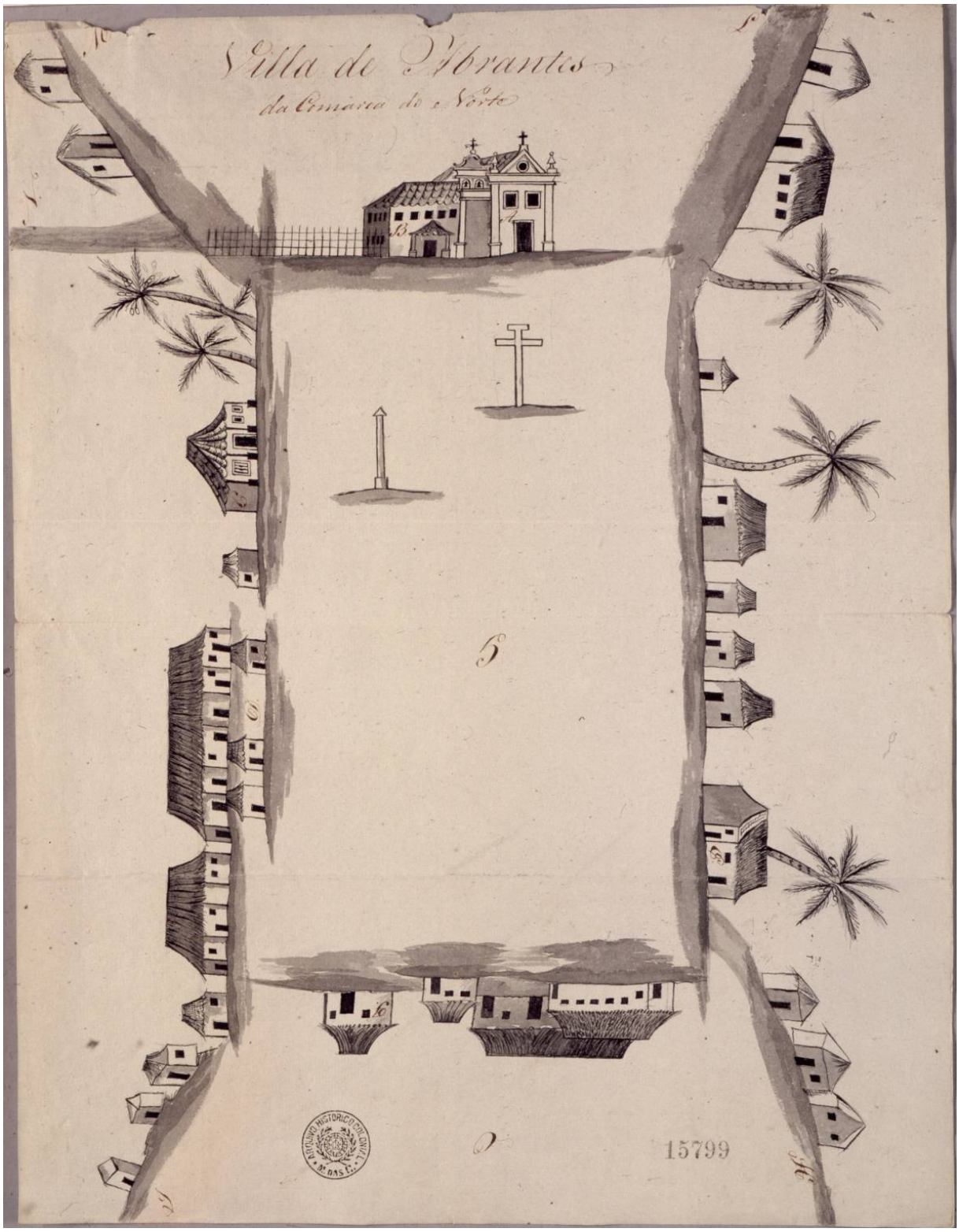

Figure 2.5
Member of the 1793 Jesuit mission to Bahia (name unrecorded), *Villa de Abrantes da Comarca do Norte*, 1793. Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Lisbon.

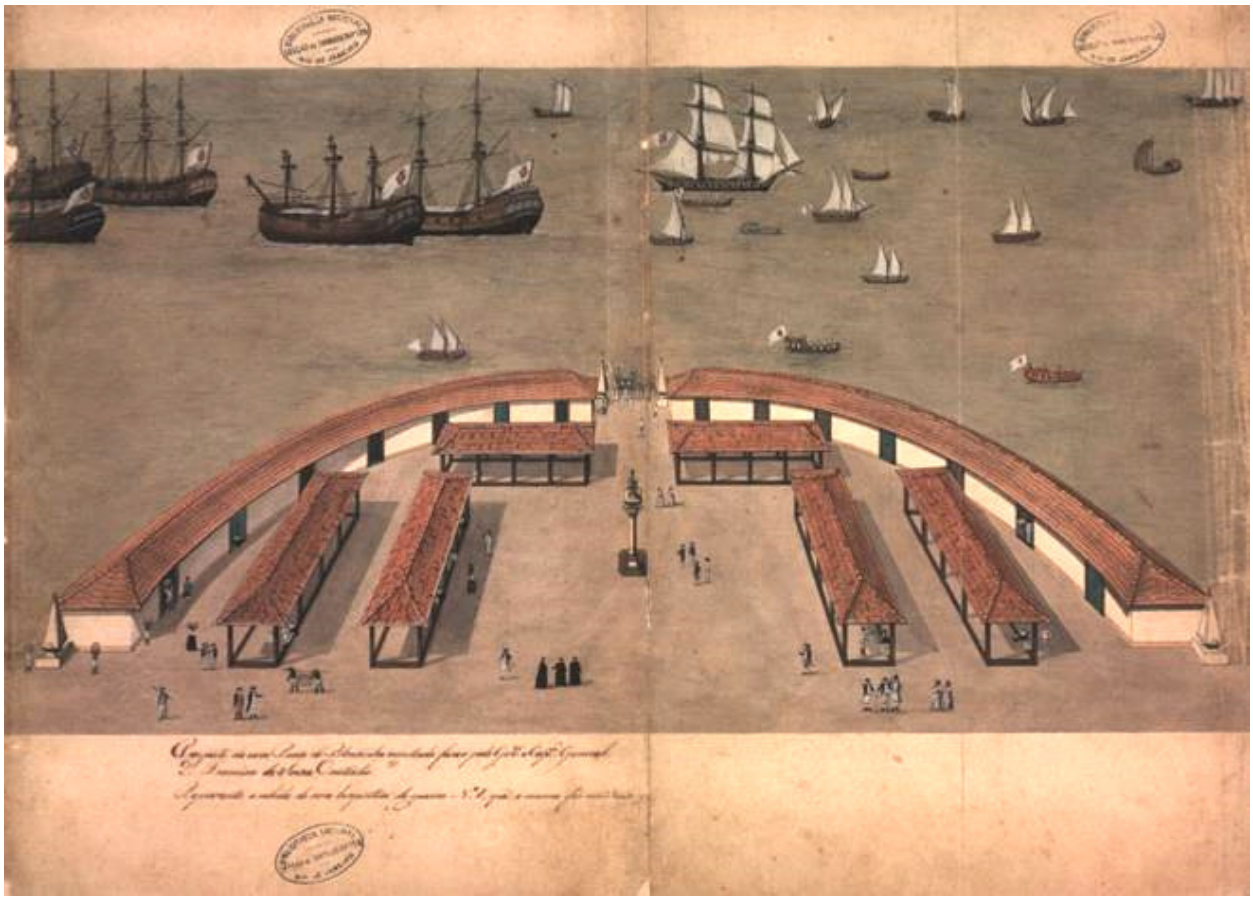

Figure 2.6
Joaquim José Codina, *Prospecto da nova Praça do Pelourinho mandada fazer pelo Gov.or e Cap.m General D. Francisco de Souza Coutinho. Representa a sahida de novo bergantim de guerra N. 1, que mesmo fez construir*, 1783-1792. Watercolor. Plate 4 in Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira, *Viagem Filosófica pelas Capitanias do Grão Pará, Rio Negro, Mato Grosso e Cuiabá – 1783-1792* (Rio de Janeiro: Conselho Federal de Cultura, 1971). Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.

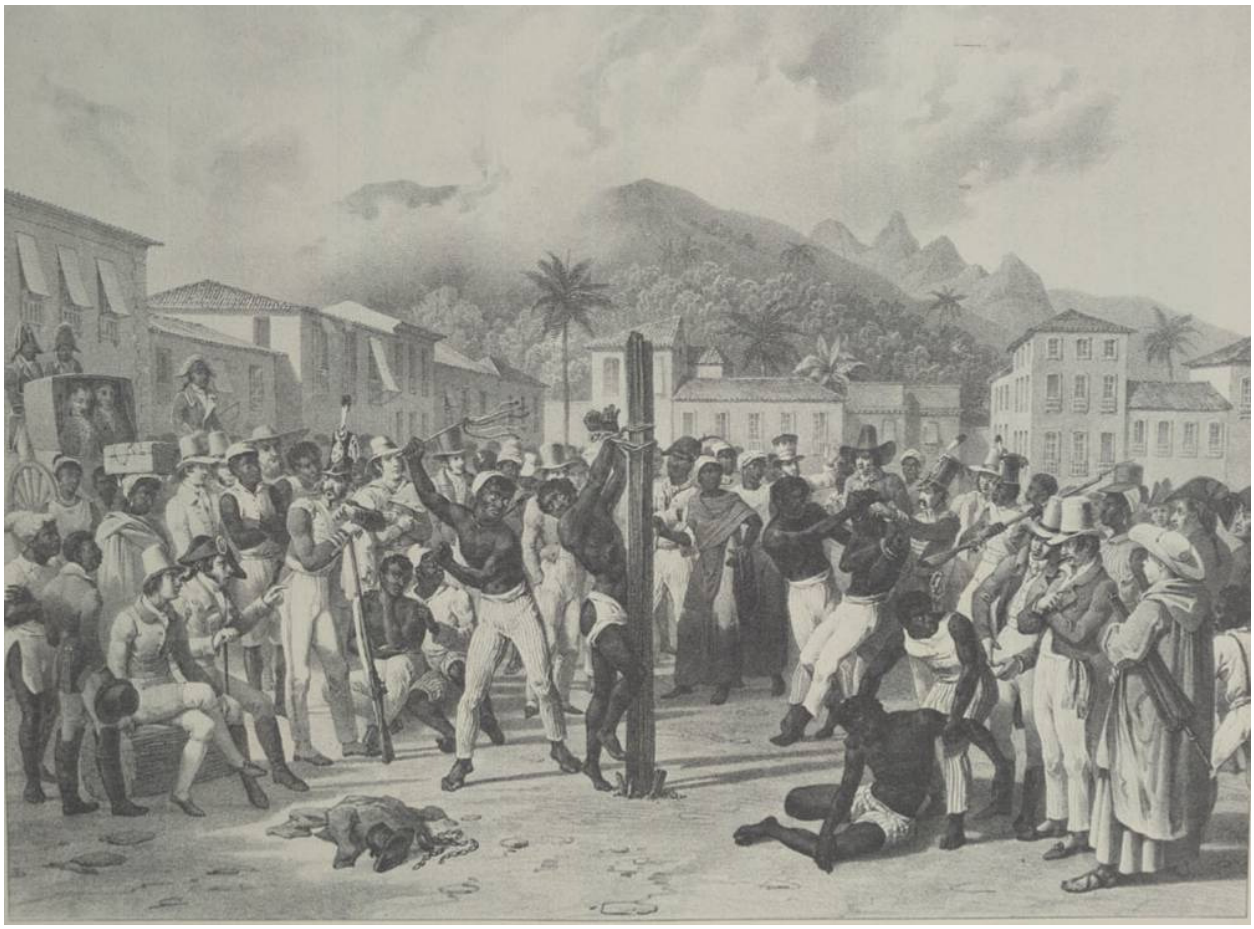

Figure 2.7
Johann Moritz Rugendas, *PUNITIONS PUBLIQUES sur la place Ste. Anne*, 1835. Lithograph. Book 4, Plate 15 in Johann Moritz Rugendas, *Voyage pittoresque dans le Brésil* (Paris: Engelmann, 1835). Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.

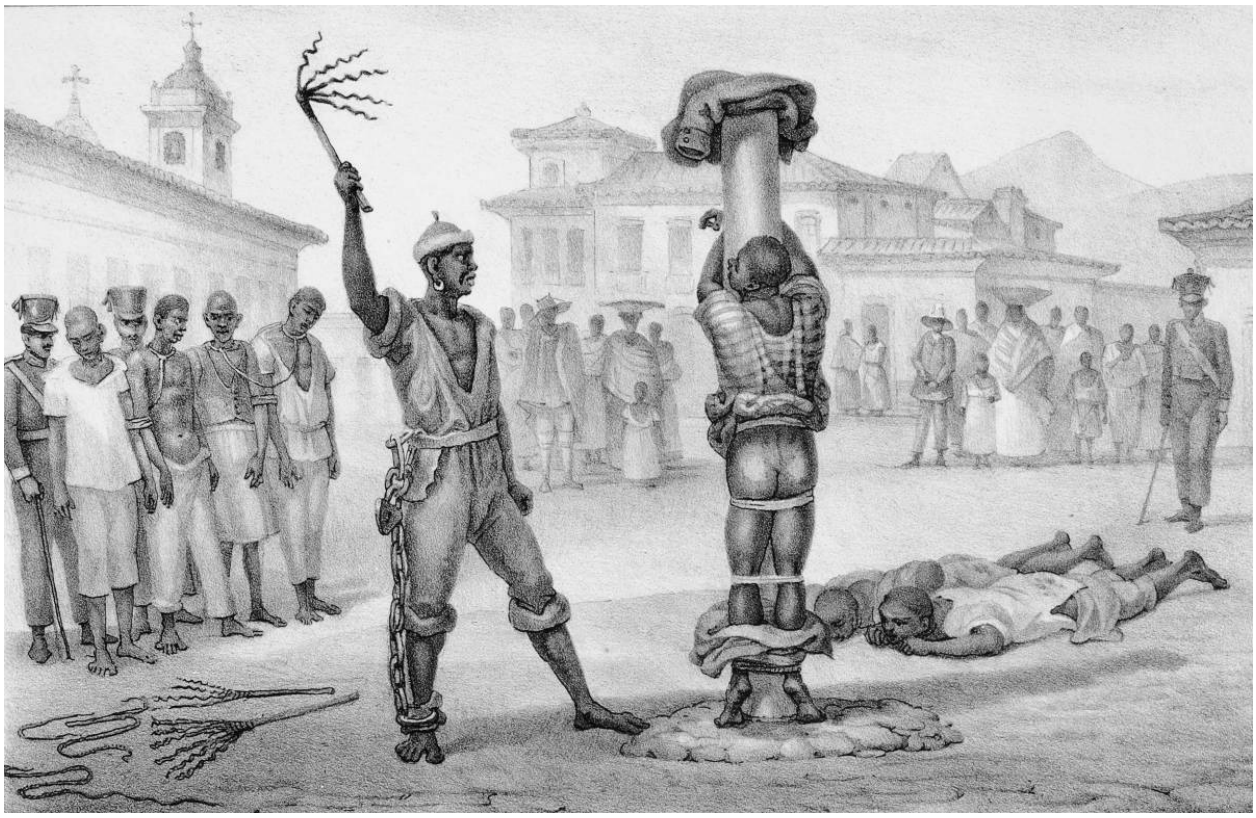

Figure 2.8
Jean-Baptiste Debret, *L'EXÉCUTION DE LA PUNITION DU FOUET*, 1835. Plate 45 (top) from *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique au Brésil*, Vol. 2. (Paris: Firmin Didot Frères, Imprimeurs de l'Institute de France, 1835). Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.

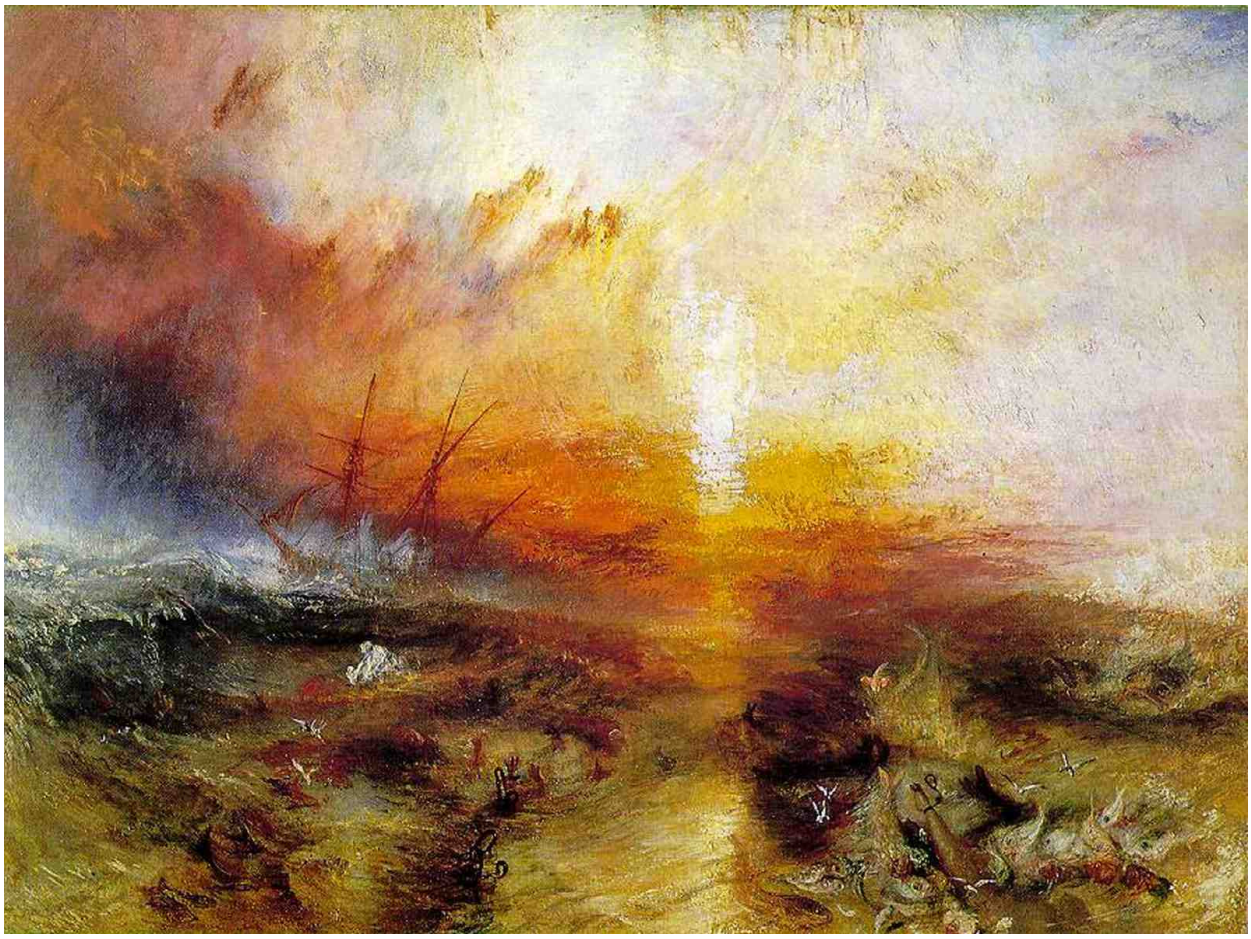

Figure 2.9
J.M.W. Turner, *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhon Coming On*, 1840. Oil on canvas. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Figure 2.10
Photograph of sign advertising *Senhor Morto* at the Igreja da Ordem Terceira do Carmo in Salvador. Photo: Matthew Francis Rarey, January 6, 2012.

Chapter Three

Insignificant Things

On February 9, 1835, an enslaved Nagô (Yorùbá) man named José found himself on trial in the house of Felix Garcia de Andrade Silveira Cavaleiro, Justice of the Peace for the first district of the Freguesia of São Pedro Velho in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil.[1] José had been arrested two weeks prior to on suspicion of participating in, or at least having advance knowledge of, a slave insurrection that shook the city on the night of January 24-25.[2] On that evening a group of nearly six hundred men, almost all African-born Muslims (*Malês*), directly confronted Salvador's authorities with clubs and knives in an attempt to overcome the city's security forces, head to the sugar plantations of the Recôncavo to recruit more disenchanted slaves, and finally lay siege to Salvador.[3] The Malê Rebellion remains the largest slave revolt in the history of the mainland Americas, and it provoked a fierce social and cultural backlash from the municipal government. Immediately following the revolt, Francisco de Souza Martins, President of Bahia province, ordered Francisco Gonçalves Martins, Salvador's Chief of Police, to round up the revolt's conspirators and leaders, and collect all necessary evidence for their trials.[4] The searches of Africans' homes came quickly, aided by locals: residents denounced enslaved Africans they

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[1] "Freguesia" is a secondary local administrative unit in Portugal and its former colonies.

[2] Trial of José, as transcribed in "Insurreição dos Malês (Julgamento), Freguezia de São Pedro Velho (Primeiro Destricto), 1835." *Anais do Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia* 53 (1996): 79. Some elaboration of José's biography may be instructive here. Though he had been in Brazil ten years, José still exactingly identified himself as "Nagô-Ebá," a designation which referred to his origin in the Yorùbá Kingdom of Egba, centered around Abeokuta in present-day southwestern Nigeria. José's enslavement in Africa and eventual transport to Brazil was likely a result of the warfare that plagued Egbaland during the 1820s and 1830s. On the wars in the Kingdom of Egba, see João José Reis, *Rebelião Escrava no Brasil: A História do Levante dos Malês em 1835*, revised and expanded edition (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2003), 338. He had had two masters since arriving in Brazil. The first was free black man named André, and the second a French merchant named Gey de Carter, to whom José was enslaved at the time of his trial.

[3] For the most thorough history of the Malê Rebellion, as well as the insurrections leading up to it in the first three decades of the nineteenth century in Bahia, see Reis, *Rebelião Escrava no Brasil*.

[4] João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 192.

knew (often regardless of their actual participation in the revolt), and joined inspectors on house raids.[5]

While some circumstantial evidence implicated José as a participant in the rebellion – he had known relationships with two other Nagô rebels, Francisco and Carlos, and José was seen leaving his master's house the night of the rebellion to meet up with them – one of the pieces of evidence used to prove his guilt, and eventually justify his punishment of eight hundred lashes, was a listing of the objects found in his possession when he was arrested on January 27. These included:

> "A sheet of paper with writing; on the top half of the front of the page, and on the reverse, were written Arabic characters. [We also found] a rope of ninety-eight coconut beads on what looked like a cotton cord with three tassels but one cannot tell of what color, and at the end of the rope a finial made of the same coconut; seven rings of white metal spun on a white rag with blue markings, a small bundle with blue markings and white lines, inside of which found a half sheet of paper, written with those same Arabic letters, folded into small folds. These objects are worthy of our distrust, and very much indicate that the African José knew of the disastrous insurrection that unfortunately took place on the night of January 24 to 25, and as such was imprisoned by the National Guard . . ."[6]

It is not clear from José's trial record whether or not he actually owned this piece of paper, nor is it apparent whether he could read and/or write Arabic. When questioned on his ownership and use of the paper, the cord, the rings, and the packet (called *patuá* or *tira*), José described each in

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[5] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 195.
[6] Trial of José, *Anais do Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia* 53 (1996): 78.

turn. The patuá, he said, "is good for the wind," an explanation met with little interest or understanding by his interrogator, but likely referred to the patuá's function to protect the wearer from *anjonu* or *alijano*: potentially wrathful spirits known in Yorùbáland as born from a union of air and fire.[7] The beads, described by José as "for prayer," were a *tessubá* used by Malês for the recitation of daily Islamic prayers; while the rings, purchased for "his fingers," served as a way for Malês to identify each other in Bahia's pluralistic religious society.[8] And the piece of paper with Arabic writing? It, José said simply, "was not his."[9]

José's explicit denial of ownership of the paper may have been a way to work around what his accusers presumed, and what I emphasize in this chapter: the intertwined histories of Afro-Atlantic religious aesthetics and slave rebellion. Such a perception was by no means unique to José. Indeed, the existence of African religious objects was the motivation for President Martins' ordered searches of Africans' homes following the revolt, the very "evidence" he sought. Martins commanded Salvador's justices of the peace to have their block inspectors "enter every house . . . belonging to black Africans and search them rigorously for men, arms, and 'written papers.'"[10] Implicit in the order, then, is that presumed participation in the rebellion was indistinguishable from ownership of these 'written papers,': "Africans who taught Arabic and distributed Islamic literature were turned in, as were people who did nothing more than have visitors in their dwellings."[11]

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[7] Yorùbá *anjonu* are directly related to Hausa spirits called *iskökí* (the plural of *iska*, literally "the wind,"). These Hausa spirits became consolidated with Muslim *jinn* and then incorporated into Yorùbá worship, then making their way to Bahia with the heavy Yorùbá and Hausa presence in the Bahian slave trade in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil,* 102, 106.

[8] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 104, 107.

[9] Trial of José, *Anais do Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia* 53 (1996): 80-81; 86.

[10] The Trial of Nécio, a Nagô, slave of Mellors Russell, APEB, Insurreições de escravos, maço 2850, fol. 6v. As quoted in Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 192.

[11] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 195.

Torquato, another enslaved Nagô arrested in the aftermath of the insurrection, also was brought to trial for his ownership of Arabic papers and the patuás that housed them. During a search of the house of Torquato's master, José Pinto Novais, police found a box belonging to Torquato containing a string of glass prayer beads and some patuás, one of "which contained cotton soaked with unknown potions" and others containing folded pieces of paper.[12] One of these papers still survives, held at the Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia in Salvador (Figure 3.1). Six lines of text, reading from right to left, reproduce *al-Fātiḥah*, known in English as "The Exordium," or "The Opener," the first sura of the Qur'an.[13]

> In the name of God compassionate and most merciful.
> Praise to God, Lord of the Worlds. Merciful, Compassionate. Ruler
> of the day of Judgment. It is you we worship and you we [ask for] help. Guide
> us on the straight path. The path of those upon whom you give
> blessings. Those who are not the object of your wrath, and are not those who
> went astray. Amen.[14]

While the Exordium's reference to the "Day of Judgment" and assistance in guiding Muslims "on the straight path" carry potent relevance for participants in a revolt with religious underpinnings, equally important are the ways Torquato activated the power of these words. Or rather, how Torquato activated these lines of ink *as* words, in making lines of ink into aesthetic and sacred invocations with ritual and political power beyond their formal structure. Cutting across these six handwritten lines, two vertical and four horizontal creases mark where Torquato carefully folded the paper over and into itself, a sacred act that worked to hide his calligraphy

[12] Trial of Torquato, a Nago, slave of Jose Pinto de Novais, APEB, Insurreições de escravos, maço 2846, fols. 4v-5. As cited in Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 195.
[13] Rolf Reichert, "Os Documentos Árabes do Arquivo do Estado da Bahia."*Afro-Ásia* 2-3 (1966): 174.
[14] Ibid. The translation from Reichert's Portuguese to English is my own.

from human view before placing it inside the leather pouch, where it could be seen only by God.[15] Yet, while cutting open these protective amulets, in smoothing out the sacred creases and folds, in revealing to human eyes a text meant as a holy request between God and his servant, this page – like those belonging to José – was not translated by officials. Instead,

> "It is found that the writing on the said pages is the same as the correspondences found on the insurgents, and it is inferred that the accused [Torquato] had relationships with them, and without a doubt contributed to the mentioned insurrection. In these Terms and conforming to the Law, it should be that the Accused be punished with the penalties decreed in article one hundred thirteen of the Penal Code…"[16]

What is clear is that José and Torquato's interrogators did not, or could not, translate the very text they decreed as evidence of complicity in the Malês' plot to overthrow Salvador's slavocracy. The description of José's paper as "Arabic" is even more exacting than in the trial records of others accused of participating in the rebellion. On January 28, during a search of the houses of seven other enslaved and free Africans, police found papers, tablets, and writing supplies for a language described as either "Arabic or Persian."[17] And on January 30, Maria Clara da Costa Pinto denounced the free Nagôs Aprígio and Belchior for "making writings that appeared [like those found] on the insurgents, with entirely strange letters and characters."[18]

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[15] On the "magical dimension" of this folding ritual, see Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 99.

[16] Trial of Torquato, as transcribed and translated from Reichert, "Os Documentos Árabes do Arquivo do Estado da Bahia,"170.

[17] Trial of Aman, Alexandre, Efigenia, Basília, Felicidade, Jadi Luis, and Felicidade, as transcribed in "1835. Insurreição dos Escravos. A Justiça – Aman – Aussá; Alexandre – Nagô; Efigenia – Nagô; Basília – Bornon; Felicidade – Tapa; Jadi Luis – Nagô; Felicidade – Nagô. Primeiro Distrito de Freguesia de Santana. Maço 2846." *Anais do Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia* 54 (1996): 46.

[18] Trial of Aprígio and Belchior, as transcribed in "1835. Insurreição dos Escravos. A Justiça: Os Pretos Forros, Africanos, de Nação Nagô, Aprigio e Belchior. Do Cartório do Júri do Escrivão Teles. Segundo Distrito da Penha. Maço 2846." *Anais do Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia* 54 (1996): 38.

Even in José's own trial, the adjective "Arabic" became synonymous for the unknown and indecipherable, at least from the perspective of his accusers: José was eventually found guilty of "having participated in the insurrection, seeing that he had a paper written with unknown characters . . . similar to those found on other insurgents."[19]

This chapter asks how it was that such seemingly innocuous objects and texts came to be so concretely linked with a violent slave insurrection. In what follows, I trace the historical trajectory of how patuás developed through the interplay of Islam and classical African religions, rose to popularity and widespread use among throughout Africa, Portugal, and Brazil, and finally – in contrast to their wide use – came to be utilized by revolt participants in Bahia, and as a result violently suppressed. As such, a perceived link between slave insurrection and patuás' contents was not necessarily an unfounded overreaction in the minds of Salvador's ruling classes. While Salvador's police force put many Africans on trial following the Malê Rebellion solely because of their ownership of relatively common and largely accepted Muslim religious objects, at the same time, many of the rebellion's participants believed in the power of patuás, and the holy writings contained inside them, to ensure their own bodily protection as well as the success of the rebellion. Patuás contained carefully selected sacred substances, objects, and writings imbued with apotropaic powers.[20] In the changing cultural and social contexts of the Atlantic world, members of all social classes, but especially the enslaved, valued the accumulative properties

[19] Judgment of José, as transcribed in "800 Açoites – José do Nascimento – Nagô, 1835. Maço – 2846. Primeiro Distrito de São Pedro Velho." *Anais do Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia* 53 (1996): 99.

[20] Small apotropaic assemblages of seemingly benign objects remain in use in Yorubaland. Called *ààlè*, David T. Doris understands these assemblages in terms of a Yorùbá "anti-aesthetics," a construction similar to my conceptualizing of the political force of assemblages of "insignificant" objects in use among Nagôs in Bahia. See David T. Doris, *Vigilant Things: On Thieves, Yoruba Anti-Aesthetics, and the Strange Fates of Ordinary Objects in Nigeria* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011). Similarly, Suzanne Preston Blier has describes the "counter-aesthetics" of Fon *bocio* figures as a direct response to the Atlantic slave trade; see Blier, "Vodun Art, Social History, and the Slave Trade," in *African Vodun: Art, Psychology, and Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 23-54.

and fluid aesthetics of these objects. In this way, patuás provided palpable political and religious efficacy for their owners precisely because their contents were not, and are not, indecipherable; not "entirely unknown" as Torquato's accusers would have it. The campaign to arrest owners of patuás and detail their contents, then, was as much a confirmation of the objects' revolutionary political power as it was a desecration of their sanctity.

In seeking to reconcile patuás' religious origins, diverse contents, wide use, and utility for slave resistance and rebellion, I take up the question of the relationship between Afro-Atlantic religious practice and slave rebellion as not necessarily distinguishable from asking why these objects evolved and emerged as politically salient in a society founded on slavery. While, as I show, patuás gained popularity and widespread use in part because their contents were often seemingly innocuous and indecipherable, these same aesthetic choices also made patuás effective counters to the aesthetic-political conditions of enslavement. Specifically, these "entirely strange" letters and characters, and these small pouches filled with strange objects, emerged as potent anti-slavery weapons because they deftly navigated what I term the "aesthetic conditions of enslavement." Enslavement, in my formulation, exists as a political and social condition through the creation and maintenance of a set of aesthetic practices in which the enslaved were both "hypervisible" and "invisible." Enslavement was both a condition of social anonymity, while at the same time a highly visible, constitutive element of political power in which the enslaved body was constantly subject to surveillance while remaining always, and often violently, on display.

This seemingly contradictory emergence of the enslaved body as both an invisible and hypervisible subject is taken up most recently in Agnes Lugo-Ortiz and Angela Rosenthal's edited volume *Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic World*. For Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal, the

frequent inclusion of "servants and pages of African descent in portraits of white sitters" during the rise of Atlantic slavery empires serves to call attention to the aesthetic conditions of enslavement I have alluded to thus far.[21] John Michael Wright's *Portrait of Miss Butterworth of Belfield Hall* (1660s) was originally painted with a figure of an African man at right, leaning across the border of the canvas, pouring water onto Butterworth's outstretched right hand (Figure 3.2). While portraiture in general can be a self-affirming and even humanizing genre of aesthetic practice, Wright's portrait of an enslaved man would seem to belie the de-humanizing logic at the center of slavery discourse: a man largely denied social and political visibility is, here, placed alongside, even constitutive of, English high society.[22] In this sense, the painting's fate would seem to be fitting: the African figure was erased from the canvas, presumably following the abolition of slavery in the United Kingdom, "so as to paint out that history, that black presence in Britain."[23] The denial of humanity and social visibility mirrors this African man's denial of entry into a seemingly humanizing and socially-uplifting artistic genre, as his erasure pushed him back out across the canvas, across the border from which he entered the scene.

And yet, at the same time, the visibility of the African water-bearer similarly calls attention to how slaves were also, in Saidiya Hartman's productive theorization, "hypervisible."[24] For Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal, the "slave," as a visualized concept, was defined by an "existence . . . permanently subject (at least theoretically within the logic of chattel

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[21] Agnes Lugo-Ortiz and Angela Rosenthal, "Introduction: Envisioning Slave Portraiture" in *Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic World*, ed. Agnes Lugo-Ortiz and Angela Rosenthal (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 6.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Mark Haworth-Booth (interviewer), "Maud Sulter." *History of Photography* 16:2 (Fall 1992): 263-266. As cited in Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal, "Introduction," in *Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic World*, ed. Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal, 1.
[24] Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 36.

slavery) to the surveilling gaze of the master and/or its surrogate figure, the overseer."[25] It is for this reason, in both José and Toruqato's trials, the act of cutting open, unfolding, and rendering visible the written contents of patuás emerges as part of the ritualized search for complicity in the insurrection, while at the same time the very impenetrability and foreignness of the patuás' contents is that which confirms the rebelliousness of both the enslaved and the objects they owned. In turn, while the evidence of José's guilt was made materially manifest in unfolding and recording the objects in his possession, equally important was the recording of José's visual appearance: an act that worked to re-establish the aesthetic conditions of slavery that José's rebellious objects attempted to undo. As such, I do not find it a coincidence that Francisco José dos Santos Morici, the scribe at José's trial, was also responsible for describing José:

> "José, of the Nagô nation, is 24 years of age, more or less, with a little facial hair and small eyes, round face, [and] symbols of his nation; [he is] small, [of] tall stature, accented being dressed in white trousers, attached with suspenders, [and a] shirt decorated with small blue markings, down to the knees…"[26]

Morici's description, while emphasizing José's identifiable physical features, glosses over the visual specifics of the "symbols of his nation." Called *abaja*, Nagôs received these facial scarification marks at a young age, reflecting their affiliation to specific Yorùbá ethnic groups: a visual language recognizable, but apparently unknown, to José's accusers.[27] As such, this visual record works to ensure that José, as now described and reproduced in Bahia's colonial legal documents, would no longer escape the vision of his master and city officials, as he had done on

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[25] Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal, "Introduction," in *Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic World*, ed. Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal, 6.
[26] Trial of José, *Anais do Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia* 53 (1996): 77-92.
[27] João José Reis and Beatriz Gallotti Mamigonian, "Nagô and Mina: The Yoruba Diaspora in Brazil" in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, ed. Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 82.

the night of January 24-25 when he left his home to meet up with Francisco and Carlos. In this way, the act of recording José's appearance mimics Article 19 of the 1842 Hispano-Cuban Slave Code which decreed, as Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal describe it, that

> "[P]ermission to leave the plantation involved not just a written document stating that such a license was granted to a particular slave . . . but that also an ekphrastic act of verbal portraiture – 'the description of the slave' – by which his or her visual particularities . . . were to be recorded so as to make the document non-transferable, the slave visible to other overseers/masters, and the coercive will enforceable."[28]

So, at the moment José was put on trial for his ownership of "entirely strange" objects, objects whose religious and protective function was dependent on the fact that their contents would be visible only to God, José's prosecutors worked to ensure that José, like the now-rebellious objects he owned, would always remain visible: to his master, to the police, to those who put him on trial, and to the archive that now houses his trial record.

Rosana Paulino's 1994 installation *Parede de Memória* ("Wall of Memory") also works through the political possibilities at the intersection of the patuá and the portrait (Figure 3.3). One of the few well-known female black Brazilian artists, Paulino's work often engages the social and identity politics of race, class, and gender in Brazilian urban society.[29] In *Parade de Memória*, Paulino constructs a wall composed of numerous patuás, each decorated with a

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[28] Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal, "Introduction" in *Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic World*, ed. Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal, 7. The Hispano-Cuban Slave Code of 1842 which they analyze is taken from Article 19 of the "Reglamento de Esclavos. Código Negro Hispano-Cubano," as reproduced in Fernando Ortiz, *Los Negros Esclavos* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1987), 444-445. Article 19 of the code is translated into English in Robert Paquette, "The Slave Code of 1842" in *Sugar Is Made with Blood: The Conspiracy of La Escalera and the Conflict between Empires over Slavery in Cuba* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 269.

[29] Kimberly Cleveland, *Black Art in Brazil: Expressions of Identity* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013), 128-131.

photocopied portrait. While I have so far emphasized the historical currency of patuás among Africans in Bahia around 1835, their evolution continues in Brazil's contemporary urban centers, where patuás function as personal apotropaic pouches linked to specific *orixás* (deities) in the Nagô nation of Candomblé. But in Paulino's installation, the sewn names of orixás that typically decorate the modern patuás carried by Candomblé practitioners (and often sold as souvenirs to tourists) here are replaced by the black-and-white faces of members of Paulino's family. On one level, this move honors Paulino's ancestors, a central ritual and personal aspect of Candomblé and Umbanda practice. On another, the patuás make visible the faces of black Brazilians who suffer the brunt of socio-racial marginalization and exclusion in Paulino's home of São Paulo. As such, for Paulino, these patuá-portraits double as apotropaic assemblages, working to protect this section of society while rendering its power clear and present in the face economic and social policies that work to marginalize and occlude black Brazilians from public life.

Yet, while Paulino's installation seeks to re-imagine the patuá as portrait to enact positive social change in modern Brazil's racially stratified urban centers, José worked to avoid this union. If the visual reproduction of the enslaved body calls attention to the aesthetic conditions on which slavery was predicated, and if José's body was reproduced as a visual subject as an aspect of his trial, then perhaps the use of the patuá during the Malê Rebellion was not so much to either render invisible or highly visible the very enslavement the rebels fought against, but, rather to utilize modes of aesthetic practice in order to "outrun" the visual altogether. "The visual," in this construct, works both as a set of aesthetic aspects that condition enslavement, and that also make enslavement into an aesthetic condition: social invisibility, hyper-surveillance, and the spectacles of ritual public violence outlined in the previous chapter.

If the erasure of the African water-bearer from Wright's portrait serves to effectively illustrate the erasure of African history from the British metropole, as well as the seemingly contradictory invisibility and hypervisibility of enslaved Africans in the British Empire, it also calls attention to the ways a fugitive retreat from the visual itself served as a constituent element of slave resistance to, and rebellion against, slavery's aesthetic conditions. In what follows, then, this chapter seeks to work through the multiple forms of retreat from, or re-classification of, the visible world that emerge as a hallmark of Afro-Atlantic religious objects and texts in circulation among Bahia's African population up to and during the Malê Rebellion. The patuá and its contents, and the strangeness of Arabic writing, here emerge as potent loci for the exploration of the relationship between aesthetic practice, the transformation of African religions in the Atlantic world, and slave rebellion in the Americas. While the question of the relationship between Afro-Atlantic religion and slave resistance and rebellion remains a fruitful and contentious debate in slavery studies, especially in Brazil, I argue that enslaved Africans in the wider Atlantic world seized on the patuá's ability to alternately navigate and flee from competing regimes of hyper-visibility and invisibility as tied to the slavery regime.

African Religion and Aesthetics on the Eve of the Rebellion

While the accusers at José's trial declared his papers and his patuá as foreign, strange, and implicitly rebellious, this declaration belies the historicity and diversity of African religious practice in Bahia prior to and during the rebellion. João José Reis estimates that in 1835 over one third of the city's population was African-born, and nearly four-fifths of Africans in Salvador were enslaved.[30] Africans in Bahia, both enslaved and free, participated in a similarly diverse

[30] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 6.

range of competing and overlapping religious practices in a society where the pluralism and multifaceted nature of religious life was more characteristic than separation and allegiance to particular cults, or as Reis cogently terms it, a "cultural free-for-all."[31] Yorùbá orisha devotion, the Aja-Fon vodun cult, Hausa *isköki* worship (wind spirits from which the aforementioned Yorùbá *anjonu* derive), and central African ancestor and *nkisi* veneration all held strong presences in Bahia's African society.[32] While these religions tended to be tied to specific ethnic groups in Salvador, Islam had a more ethnically diverse following. "Malê," rather than referring to a specific ethnic group, was used all segments of the population to refer to African-born Muslims, and thus encompassed ethnic groups such as Nagôs (Yorùbá), Jejes (Aja-Fon), Hausas, Tapas, and Bornus.[33] In addition, many Africans also practiced forms of Catholicism at all social levels at the same time they participated in other African religious practice.[34]

Social and cultural divisions among Africans in early nineteenth-century Bahia manifested as, in some cases, well-defined and stratified while, in other situations, confusing and multifaceted, with numerous and shifting identities mapped onto divided constituencies and ethnic groups.[35] In this context, the Count of Arcos, Governor of Bahia from 1810 to 1818, espoused a policy of encouraging African ethnic cultural expression as a means of maintaining African cultural divisions.[36] The Count "believed Africans should be permitted to practice their religions, play their music, and dance traditional dances, since the free expression of African

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[31] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 97.
[32] Reis, *Rebelião Escrava no Brasil*, 177.
[33] Ibid.
[34] On African participation in Catholic brotherhoods in Salvador in the nineteenth century, see João José Reis, "Brotherhoods and Baroque Catholicism," in *Death is a Festival: Funeral Rites and Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*, trans. H. Sabrina Gledhill (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 39-65; and Luis Nicolau Parés, "Do Calundu ao Candomblé: O Processo Formativo da Religião Afro-Brasileira," in *A formação do Candomblé: História e ritual da nação jeje na Bahia* (Campinas: Editora Unicamp, 2007), 101-124.
[35] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 154.
[36] On Arcos' policy of free African cultural expression as a means of limiting or preventing slave rebellion, see Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 45.

traditions would exacerbate ethnic differences," and thus lessen the chance for the formation of a pan-African ethnic identity in Salvador which could coalesce into an organized revolt like that which had occurred in Haiti only a decade prior.[37] Yet, Arcos' policy seems to have failed, as the four major slave revolts in Bahia during his tenure led Bahia's military commander, Felisberto Caldeira Brant Pontes, to write to the court in Rio de Janeiro to denounce the governor and his policy of allowing free African cultural expression.[38]

Arcos and Brant Pontes seemed to agree that African religious practice was, in some way, related to slave rebellion. Whether free religious practice exacerbated slave rebellions or prevented them, both seemed to implicitly tie African religions to both Africans and the enslaved. Yet Africans readily participated in classic African religions as well as Islam and Christianity, with such practices overlapping persons and social groups. At the same time, seemingly prototypical African religious practices were by no means confined to enslaved or free Africans and blacks – a point seemingly overlooked by both Arcos and Pontes. Indeed, it is the very ability of Afro-Atlantic religions to move across seeming boundaries of race, ethnic affiliation, and class in nineteenth century Bahian society that make it difficult to discuss how, if at all, African religions contributed to African slave resistance on either a quotidian level or as part of a violent slave rebellion. Patuás like those belonging to José and Torquato, for example, labeled as rebellious following the 1835 revolt, were actually widely used by both Muslims and non-Muslims in the city. The spread of these amulets through Bahia's African and white populations was quickly possible because, as pragmatic solutions to real-world problems, they both posed no threat to, and could be easily incorporated into, the worldviews of the

[37] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 45.
[38] Ibid, 51.

aforementioned other African religious systems.[39]

This point is illustrated by the case of Iyá Nassô, a free Nagô also known by her Catholic name of Francisca da Silva. In 1835, she operated a Candomblé temple at her home in the Rua do Passo Parish of Salvador with José Pedro Autran, another free Nagô whom she had married in 1832.[40] In the aftermath of the rebellion and the citywide search for the African objects that officials feared had contributed to it, police searched the house on February 5, 1835.[41] Their search was based on accusations raised by Martinho Ferreira de Souza, a tailor of mixed descent, and his wife, Mônica Maria de São José, against Francisca da Silva's two free sons by birth and by Candomblé: Domingos da Silva and Thomé José Alves.[42] Martinho and Mônica reported to the police that they suspected living in Francisca's home were "blacks who were accomplices to the insurrection."[43] Martinho had said that Thomé and Domingos "held in their house large gatherings of blacks, who were constantly coming and going, and that this had been going on for quite some time."[44] Mônica also noted these large gatherings of Africans at Thomé and Domingos' residence, which were "attended by both men and women, dancing and singing in their language."[45]

As we have seen previously, the recording of the objects used in these Candomblé rituals was of primary importance to their accusers. Martinho testified that during these gatherings Thomé wore "a white shirt [. . .] with a scooped neck like a woman's blouse, decorated with a

[39] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 51.
[40] Lisa Earl Castillo and Luis Nicolau Parés, "Marcelina da Silva: A Nineteenth-Century *Candomblé* Priestess in Bahia." *Slavery and Abolition* 31:1 (March 2010): 4.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Reis, *Rebelião Escrava no Brasil*, 460, 466-467.
[43] FPV, Notas avulsas sobre insurreições de escravos, 267. As cited in Castillo and Parés, "Mareclina da Silva," 6.
[44] Ibid. As cited in Castillo and Parés, "Mareclina da Silva," 7.
[45] Ibid, 268. As cited in Castillo and Parés, "Mareclina da Silva," 7.

red cloth."[46] Mônica mentioned Domingos' attire, noting that he wore garments similar to Thomé as well as "large quantities of beaded necklaces."[47] Confirming their suspicions, inside the home police discovered a patuá, described as a "sewn leather pouch measuring an inch and a half" containing "a piece of paper with Arabic characters."[48] For this pouch, and paper inside it, the police arrested Thomé.[49] Domingos' arrest followed in late March, as the result of further accusations leveled by Martino and Mônica. And further raising their suspicion, in the days following the rebellion – during the witch-hunt for African religious objects in the city – Martinho claimed he had seen Thomé and Domingos "appearing furtively at the window, as though they wanted no one to see them . . . they seemed frightened and . . . no longer went out of the house."[50]

Martinho and Mônica apparently were not able to distinguish between religious observances for Candomblé and Islam in Bahia. The red and white clothing worn by the brothers, and their use of beaded necklaces, suggests they were both initiated to Xangô, orixá of thunder, lightning, and drumming who is the deified manifestation of the legendary fourth king of Oyó. As Thomé, like his mother, was identified as being from Oyó, this association makes sense on both a biographical and religious level. At the same time, the visual symbolism and syncretism between the use of white clothing and African-language chants was all the evidence Martinho and Mônica needed. The Malês participating in the rebellion donned all white clothing, the same color still used during Candomblé ceremonies, and the same color used in Iyá Nassô's temple in 1835. Thus, in the aftermath of the rebellion, this visual association of white clothing

[46] FPV, Notas avulsas sobre insurreições de escravos, 267. As cited in Castillo and Parés, "Mareclina da Silva," 7.
[47] Ibid, 268. As cited in Castillo and Parés, "Mareclina da Silva," 7.
[48] Ibid, 267. As cited in Castillo and Parés, "Mareclina da Silva," 6.
[49] Ibid. As cited in Castillo and Parés, "Mareclina da Silva," 6.
[50] Ibid. As cited in Castillo and Parés, "Mareclina da Silva," 7.

and African bodies worked to generalize African religious practice in the minds of outsiders, and implicitly link it to slave rebellion and resistance. Yet, even as a Candomblé practitioner, it seems that Thomé was not a cultural separatist, as he seemingly did not mark a clear delineation between Islamic practices and Candomblé. His use of a patuá, and its containing of Arabic writings, speaks to his incorporation of syncretic Afro-Atlantic ritual practices into his own religious universe. At the same time, Bahian authorities after the rebellion marked patuás as distinct manifestations of African religion, and thus held in distinct opposition to wider society. How, then, are we to parse out the complex webs of religious affiliation, aesthetic-religious practice, African expression, and slave rebellion through patuás?

Bolsas de Mandinga, "African" Religion, and Flight from the Visual

Patuás became prevalent in Bahia in the mid-1700s, but their use in the wider Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic preceded their introduction to Bahia by centuries.[51] Prior to the nineteenth century, the apoptropaic leather pouches termed patuás in Bahia were called *bolsas* ("bags" or "pouches") or *bolsas de mandinga* ("Mandinka pouches").[52] While personal amulets imbued with protective powers had been in use in Europe since the Middle Ages, the use of bolsas de mandinga spread throughout western and central Africa, Portugal, and Brazil primarily as a result of the inventiveness and ingenuity of Africans whose biographies crossed through Africa,

[51] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 135.

[52] While in this section I trace the evolution of "bolsas" to "bolsas de mandinga," it is worth noting that not all bolsas were mandingas, and vice versa. "Bolsa" was a generic term to refer to a pouch or packet filled with protective or powerful substances. Meanwhile, "mandinga" eventually came to refer to any talisman, purportedly of African origin, imbued with magical powers – regardless of whether or not it was a pouch. Thus, although originally the objects that would become known as "bolsas de mandinga" were called only "bolsas," other non-bolsa mandingas still circulated. For this reason in this chapter I use "bolsas de mandinga" throughout. Though my frequent use of the term may seem clunky, I prefer its clunky precision over the facile ambiguity of just "bolsa," even though "bolsa" was the only term used in Inquisition records prior to the early eighteenth century.

Europe, and the Americas.[53] The earliest known mention of the use of bolsas de mandinga was on the Guinea Coast in 1606, when Jesuit priest Balthezar Barreira wrote that Mandinka Muslims disseminated pouches filled with Qur'anic papers and other powerful substances meant to protect the wearer from harm.[54] While along the Guinea Coast Mandinkas intended the dissemination of these pouches to spread Islam in the region, over the following century bolsas de mandinga were de-coupled from Islam as their popularity spread across western Africa.[55] By 1656, bolsas de mandinga were in use in Cacheu (in modern Guinea-Bissau), a major Portuguese port.[56] From Cacheu, bolsas went further into the Atlantic, and the earliest known record of the use of bolsas de mandinga outside Africa came only sixteen years later, in Lisbon.[57]

Unsurprisingly, the relatively rapid spread of a seemingly African religious practice in the capital did not sit well with the Portuguese Inquisition. Inquisition records through the first three decades of the 1700s name a series of manufacturers of bolsas de mandinga (*mandingueiros*) prosecuted on charges of *feitiçaria* ("sorcery").[58] By and large, the mandingueiros named in these trials were male, African, often enslaved, and had spent time in Brazil.[59] The passage of mandingueiros through both Brazil and Africa seemed not only to

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[53] Didier Lahon, "Inquisição, pacto com o demónio, e 'magia' africana em Lisboa no século XVIII." *Topoi* 5:8 (January-June 2004): 26.

[54] James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 181.

[55] Ibid.

[56] James H. Sweet, "Slaves, Convicts, and Exiles: African Travellers in the Portuguese Atlantic World, 1720-1750," in *Bridging the Early Modern Atlantic World: People, Products, and Practices on the Move*, ed. Caroline A. Williams (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 197.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Roger Sansi, "Sorcery and Fetishism in the Modern Atlantic," in *Sorcery in the Black Atlantic*, ed. Luis Nicolau Parés and Roger Sansi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 23. Sansi's essay contains a detailed history of the development and deployment of the concept of *feitiçaria* throughout the Lusophone Atlantic, particularly in tandem with evolving conceptions of sorcery and fetishism. In addition, Sansi argues – perhaps a bit over-zealously – that "bolsas de mandinga" were nearly synonymous with charges of *feitiçaria* in eighteenth-century Portuguese Inquisition records.

[59] Laura de Mello e Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross: Witchcraft, Slavery, and Popular Religion in Colonial Brazil*, trans. Diane Grosklaus Whitty (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 135; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 183-184.

generate fear and suspicion on the part of the Inquisition, but indicates that Africans constructed and disseminated ritual and magical discourses and practices that dynamically adapted to the wider Afro-Atlantic world.[60] But when asked to name their clients, mandingueiros described a practice by no means restricted to enslaved African males. Indeed, the production and use of bolsas de mandinga crossed the permeable boundaries of race and class in the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic. Bolsas de mandinga were employed by blacks and whites, Africans and the Portuguese, and enslaved and free persons. Yet while use of the bolsas de mandinga in the early eighteenth century expanded to all levels of society, trial records begin to refer to what were previously termed only "bolsas" as "bolsas de mandinga." On one hand, "mandinga," stands in for the cultural origin of the pouches, tracing them back to the Mandinka populations Barreira described in 1606. At the same time, we should note that the emphasis on the "African" origin and nature of the bolsas coincides with the increasing perception that bolsas de mandinga were not only crossing racial and geographic lines in their use, but also their construction.[61] In other words: the Inquisition declared the bolsas de mandinga "African" at the moment they took on a non-African clientele, and as they began to widely incorporate identifiably European and Brazilian objects and substances into their contents.

How, then, did bolsas de mandinga manage to so quickly penetrate cultural practice across social levels and racial divisions? On one hand, the adaptability of bolsas de mandinga likely contributed to their popularity. Small and easily portable, the convenience of bolsas de mandinga also easily folded into older European practices of amulet-making that persisted in American colonies. At the same time, users of bolsas de mandinga likely put great faith in the

[60] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 135; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 183-184.
[61] Sansi, "Sorcery and Fetishism in the Modern Atlantic," 23; Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 134.

magical properties both of their foreign origins, and diverse contents. As Roger Sansi has argued, "[T]he occultation of a supposed secret is often central to sorcery . . . instead of being an obstacle, [it] facilitates the appropriation of new elements, which are described as more secret, more hidden, more fundamental, and at a deeper level of knowledge."[62] In this way, the construction of bolsas de mandinga as sealed pouches likely facilitated their easy incorporation of foreign elements and contexts, and thus their adaptability and malleability across the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic. As Sansi argues, the contents of the bolsas, even as labeled "mandinga," were not quintessentially or identifiably African, and in Lisbon rarely incorporated the Qur'anic texts used in Guinea or Bahia. Instead, the Inquisition in Lisbon found inside the bolsas de mandinga contents such as "[a]ltar stones, pieces of paper with Christian orations, rocks, sticks, roots, bones, hair, animal skins, feathers, powders, and consecrated particles," overall, as Sansi summarizes, "random objects collected in the more extraordinary situations."[63] Thus, in addition to being hidden from view, the legibility of the contents of bolsas de mandinga were similarly obscure, their powers in a sense guaranteed by their makers' – and their contents' – crossing of mysterious lands like Brazil and Africa. Originating in the sorcery of Africa, for inquisitors and slaves in Lisbon, the power of bolsas de mandinga was only confirmed and strengthened in Brazil, a land "where sorcery flourished," a cultural incubator of magical practices.[64]

This seeming emphasis on the foreign, exceptional, and mysterious character of the pouches and their contents, as opposed to a strict association of *feitiçaria* with Africa-Brazil exchanges, seems to be supported by the fact that while the bolsas were labeled as "mandinga," in Lisbon, elsewhere in the Portuguese Empire other designations emphasized other cultural

[62] Sansi, "Sorcery and Fetishism in the Modern Atlantic," 21-22.
[63] Ibid, 24.
[64] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 135.

affiliations for bolsas in general. In the early eighteenth century in Angola, for example, the free soldier Vicente de Morais was put on trial under charges of making bolsas de mandinga. But Morais' trial record also refers to the bolsas as "Sallamanca," "Cabo Verde," or "São Paulo," – or, more generally, Europe, the islands of the African Atlantic, and the Americas.[65] Thus the power of the bolsa de mandinga, Sansi argues, is that "more than the origin itself, is that it is not from *here* but from somewhere else, from some strange and special place that, like the contents of the bag, is exceptional."[66]

It is tempting, then, to situate the bolsa de mandinga as an African ritual practice that survived the Middle Passage and thus represents the persistence of African religious practices in the Americas. Yet, as we have seen, bolsas de mandinga were not used solely by Africans. In fact, not one of the Africans denounced as a mandingueiro in the Lisbon trials was Mandinka. Instead, these were western and central Africans who were already picking up the bolsa de mandinga as a practice they found productive in navigating enslaved life in the colonies as well as in Africa. As I have emphasized, the users of bolsas de mandinga were members of all social levels, racial divisions, and classes. In one way this asserts the dynamic adaptation and malleability of African aesthetic practices in the wider Atlantic. But at the same time, we are left at a crossroads. If the power of the bolsa de mandinga's contents were *defined* through not only their "foreign" origins and the cultural and ritual liminality of their contents, and if their users crossed all social and racial groups, does this leave any space to discuss the bolsa de mandingas' role in the persistence of African ritual practice, particularly as linked to resistance to, and rebellion against, enslavement? Ironically, I argue that it does; mainly, that the ability of bolsas

[65] Sansi, "Sorcery and Fetishism in the Modern Atlantic," 24.
[66] Ibid, 25.

de mandinga, in both use and content, to cross social and geographic borders was what made them such effective objects to outrun the aesthetic conditions of enslavement.

Sealing the Body

The extent to which we can characterize the bolsas de mandinga as an anti- or counter-slavery practice remains a salient topic of debate. Rachel Harding, James Sweet, and Laura de Mello e Souza all detail the ways in which enslaved Africans used bolsas de mandinga to fight against the violence of enslavement.[67] Yet for Roger Sansi, the sheer number of whites using bolsas de mandinga in Portugal in the early eighteenth century makes it "a bit reductive to explain sorcery discourse just as a function of slave resistance or African cultural resistance in general."[68] Inquisition records rarely mention slave resistance as a specific motivating factor for the production of bolsas de mandinga, instead citing a goal to *fechar o corpo*, or literally "to seal the body." This "seal" provided by the bolsa de mandinga not only to protected the body from interpersonal violence such as knives, guns, and other weapons, but also from malevolent spirits, sicknesses, and curses which could potentially enter the body, and thus were just as dangerous as physical violence. To "fechar o corpo," then, collapses the distinction between the physical and the spiritual in a united goal to protect bodily autonomy from outside dangers.

The first recorded use of a bolsa de mandinga outside of Africa, in fact, speaks to exactly this goal: to protect the body. In 1672 Manuel, a slave, was accused of using a bolsa de mandinga tied around his wrist in order to protect himself from knife slashes, a theory he

[67] Rachel Harding, *A Refuge in Thunder: Candomblé and Alternative Spaces of Blackness* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 24-27; Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 135-141; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 181-185.
[68] Sansi, "Sorcery and Fetishism in the Modern Atlantic," 24.

attempted to prove through public displays of the efficacy of the bolsas de mandinga he made.[69] In 1715, Antonio Dias Pilarte, a white soldier stationed at the fortress of Muxima in Angola, was denounced as a mandingueiro. Antonio placed his bolsas de mandingas around the neck of a dog, and then shot it twice. The dog escaped unharmed, thus proving the effectiveness of the bolsas de mandinga Antonio produced.[70] In 1730, Luís de Lima, an enslaved man born on the coast of Dahomey, confessed to using bolsas de mandinga in both Pernambuco (Brazil) and Porto (Portugal), saying that with his bolsa de mandinga he "never felt fear of anything," and that, even though he had been stabbed on numerous occasions, he was never injured.[71] And in the first half of the eighteenth century, João de Siqueira Varejão Castelo Branco, a resident of Recife, staged a private performance to show the protective ability of his bolsas de mandinga. In the home of Caetano da Silveira, Siqueira proclaimed that "nothing of iron could enter him," and showed as proof the bolsa de mandinga that hung around his neck. Calling for a house slave, Siqueira put the pouch around the slave's neck and ordered a sword to be pushed into the slave's body. Silveira did not consent, saying he did not believe in the power of the bolsas de mandinga, and pleaded with Siqueira to remove the pouch. Instead, Siqueira then put the pouch back around his own neck, and pushed the sword into his own chest. The sword "did not in any wise way harm him."[72] Siqueira's pouch gained its power from its contents: "communion cloths and purificators,

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[69] ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, Cadernos do Promotor, No. 51, Livro 248, fols. 283-285v. As cited in Sweet, "Slaves, Convicts, and Exiles," in *Bridging the Early Modern Atlantic World*, ed. Williams, 197.

[70] ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, Tribunal do Santo Ofício, Processo 5477. For the full story of this case, see Selma Pantoja, "Inquisição, degredo e mestiçagem em Angola no século XVIII." *Revista Portuguesa de Ciência das Religiões* 5/6 (2004): 117-136. The case is also discussed briefly in John K. Thornton, "Central Africa in the Era of the Slave Trade," in *Slaves, Subjects, and Subversives: Blacks in Colonial Latin America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 99; as well as Walter Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil: Culture, Identity, and an Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1830* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 241, n140.

[71] Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 183.

[72] ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, maço 27-20 (Novos Maços). As cited in Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 132.

and other little things."[73]

In the previous chapter, I argued that colonial Brazilian urban life defined the black body through its capacity to endure violence, and in turn positioned violent spectacles of tortured enslaved bodies as confirmations (albeit potentially precarious ones) of imperial authority. What should be striking in the aforementioned mandingueiro denunciations, then, are the ways in which the enslaved body is routinely situated – by both whites *and* enslaved Africans – as the fitting test subject for mandingas' ability to protect from bodily penetration. Manuel, for example, used his own body as a public test subject, whereby the confirmation of the bolsa de mandinga's effectiveness lied in its capacity to stop what I have argued was central to Portuguese imperial authority: the public spectacle of the violated slave, but also the expectation that enslaved bodies like his were *meant* to be receptors of such violence.

Similarly, Siqueira calls for "a slave," a move which emphasizes his own power to call forth others' bodies for violent uses, but also speaks to his seeming lack of confidence in the ability of the bolsa de mandinga to protect his own body. The ironic inversion is that the enslaved body, which so often has been the test for whips, chains, and violent punishments, here is meant to "test" an iron sword at exactly the same moment one tests its seeming antidote: the bolsa de mandinga. As such, whether or not the bolsa de mandinga worked seems to be immaterial, as Siqueira's test only re-confirms the position of the enslaved body as preconditioned for the reception of pain, while Siqueira's own avoidance of it entrenches his power over the enslaved body, as well as his ability to avoid the systemic violence of colonial life. Only Silveira's pleading to protect his slave (and thus his property), forced Siqueira to use his own body instead. Following Siqueira's demonstration, in this sense, Antonio's story is more

[73] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 132.

fitting than an exception. His use of a dog, instead of a human body, underscores the low value placed on slave life relative to others: the life of a dog, or the life of a slave. Perhaps the choice was immaterial for Antonio.

Around the necks and wrists of enslaved Africans, then, bolsas de mandinga confounded aesthetic logics of control over the enslaved body. On one hand, bolsa demonstrations relied on, and even confirmed, the perceived capacity of the enslaved body to receive violence and pain. But at the same time, in demonstrating the effectiveness of bolsas de mandinga, slaves could overcome the systemic violence of enslaved life in Portugal and its colonies. As such, these performances did not only test the bolsa de mandinga. They demonstrated they precariousness of colonial authority, in that bolsas de mandinga outran the aesthetic conditions of enslavement altogether by providing countering the everyday violence of slavery, both in private and in public display.

As Souza argues, "maleficent magic or sorcery became a *necessity* for a society based on slavery. It not only furnished weapons with which slaves could wage a silent battle against their masters (quite often the only battle possible); it also legitimized repression of and violence against these captives."[74] As such, it should also not surprise us that many enslaved Africans explicitly utilized their bolsas de mandinga to escape punishment by their masters. These same slaves also likely believed that their eventual subjection to punishment by inquisitors was made possible by the confiscation and desecration of their bolsas de mandinga. In 1732, an enslaved man named Antônio de Sousa, living in Lisbon, was punished harshly by his master even though Antônio had tried to avoid punishment through the use of a bolsa de mandinga made of blue cloth, a filled piece of a bull's horn, some bits of white paper, and some red feathers from a

[74] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 126.

Brazilian bird.[75] In 1729 Manuel da Piedade, a slave who had run away from Captain Gaspar de Valadares, his owner in Porto, was denounced as a mandingueiro by a number of other slaves in Coimbra. When he was put on trial in Lisbon the following year, he confessed that he carried around with him a "prayer of the Just Judge, which afforded protection against the dangers of the sea and beatings," two aspects with which he would have been familiar through his life. As a captain's slave, Manuel likely needed much protection from the sea: he had acquired the bolsa de mandinga in Bahia, and presumably had made use of it in his further stops, which included Pernambuco and other cities around Portugal, while also using it to protect from common beatings as an enslaved man.[76]

While, as discussed above, previous studies have noted the goal of the bolsa de mandinga to "seal" the body from both physical and spiritual penetration, my focus here on the bolsa de mandinga as a weapon to counter the aesthetic conditions of enslavement also positions it at the crossing of physical penetration and sexual violence. In the previous chapter, I traced the ways the image the spectacle of the violated enslaved black body bounded racial-sexual desire with political authority. While enslaved persons in general were subject to violence as a result of perceived offenses or criminal behavior – actions for which they seemingly had a choice – enslaved women could neither give consent nor fight against sexual advances by masters. As Saidiya Hartman argues in reference to the nineteenth-century southern United States, enslaved women were legally unable to grant sexual consent, and thus carried the constant presumption of consent and willingness.[77] What role, then, did bolsas de mandinga play in negotiating or escaping this absence of sexual consent for the enslaved?

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[75] Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 185.
[76] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 134; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 183.
[77] Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection*, 81.

The gendering of the production and use of bolsas de mandinga begins in the archive, where almost all recorded *mandingueiros* are male. Yet it is precisely this highly gendered division of bolsa de mandinga-use that should give us pause when looking at two watercolors by Carlos Julião, the Italian-born Portuguese colonel, cartographer, and artist active in Brazil in the second half of the eighteenth century. In this time Julião produced a series of watercolor paintings, today forty-three of which are bound together at the Biblioteca Nacional in Rio de Janeiro under the title *Figurinhos de Brancos e Negros dos Uzos do Rio de Janeiro e Serro do Frio* ("Figures of Whites and Blacks [illustrating] the Customs of Rio de Janeiro and Serro do Frio).[78] In the series, as Silvia Hunold Lara argues, racial identity, geographic location, and cultural practice are all intimately linked, as a series of recognizable human types.[79] In the untitled Plate 33 from the series, Julião presents the figure of a female fruit seller (Figure 3.4). Effortlessly supporting bountiful fruit produce on her head, following the argument I forwarded in chapter one, she also signals her "productive" capabilities through the child she carries on her back – two cues that mark her as fertile for both the production of food and the production of slaves. Yet around her neck she wears a small black pouch on a red string, an object closely matching descriptions of bolsas de mandinga that circulated in Brazil at this time period.

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[78] Though the originals are held in Rio de Janeiro, the plates are reproduced in full-color in Carlos Julião, *Riscos Illuminados de Figurinhos Brancos e Negros dos Uzos do Rio de Janeiro e Serro do Frio* (Rio de Janeiro: Biblioteca Nacional, 1960). In the preface to this edition, Lygia Cunha dates Julião's watercolors to after 1776, based on an analysis of an allegory in one of the plates; see Julião, *Riscos Illuminados*, ix-xi. However, in a 1949 manuscript attached to the originals, J.W. Rodrigues dates the paintings to "after 1770," thus expanding the time during which they were produced. Similarly complicating matters is that Julião's original watercolors are actually bound with two other series: *Noticia Summaria do Gentilismo da Asia com Riscos Illuminados*, another set of watercolors, also presumably by Julião, providing a visual dictionary of Hindu religious practice in Goa (India); and *Ditos de Vasos e Tecidos Peruvianos*, a series of plates of Inca vases salvaged from a Spanish galleon discovered near the coast of Peniche, Portugal during the reign of Maria I (1777-1816). The date and author of this latter set is unknown. For a detailed exploration of the shifting names, date attributions, and contents of all these works, see Valéria Piccoli Gabriel da Silva, *Figurinhas de brancos e negros: Carlos Julião e o mundo colonial Português* (Ph.D. diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2010).

[79] Silvia Hunold Lara, "Customs and Costumes: Carlos Julião and the Image of Black Slaves in Late Eighteenth-Century Brazil." *Slavery and Abolition* 23:2 (2002): 130.

Similarly, as noted previously, the manufacturers of bolsas de mandinga had biographies that crossed both African and Brazil. While in this image Julião does not record the geographic or cultural identity of his figure, he does in the Salvador panorama discussed in the Introduction, where she is labeled "Black Mina woman of Bahia" (Figure 0.1). As Silvia Hunold Lara has noted, this designation implies the transatlantic and malleable identity of the fruit seller, who is "*of* Bahia" but remains "Mina," implying birth in Africa but current enslavement in Brazil.[80]

The overwhelmingly gendered record of bolsa de mandinga-use, crossed with Julião's placement of a bolsa de mandinga around an African female fruit-seller's neck, calls attention to the possibility of the bolsa de mandinga as both a protector from, and facilitator of, sexual contact and sexual violence. The ability of the bolsa de mandinga to attract members of the opposite sex was facilitated by the occasional inclusion of *cartas de tocar* ("touch cards") inside the pouches. The use of cartas de tocar was "widespread" in Portugal, even prior to the introduction of bolsas de mandinga, and they came to use in Brazil from older Portuguese practices.[81] These cards, when touched to another person, would occasionally be used to transmit protective powers (like the bolsa de mandinga), but more frequently were used to foster mutual romantic and sexual desire.[82] In Recife, for example, Antonio José Barreto claimed ownership of a piece of paper that worked to not only "fechar o corpo" as the bolsa de mandinga did, but also guaranteed that "any woman that touched it would subject herself to his will."[83] And José Francisco Pereira, a mandingueiro denounced in Lisbon in 1730 (whose biography will be

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[80] Lara was first to note this make this point; see Lara, "Customs and Costumes," 137. The point is further emphasized in Maria Manuela Tenreiro, "Military Encounters in the Eighteenth Century: Carlos Julião and Racial Representations in the Portuguese Empire." *Portuguese Studies* 23:1 (2007): 18.

[81] Lahon, "Inquisição, pacto com o demônio e 'magia' Africana," 27.

[82] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 318; José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e superstição num pais "sem caça às bruxas"*, *1600-1774* (Lisbon: Notícias editorial, 1997), 114. As quoted in Lahon, "Inquisição, pacto com o demônio e 'magia' Africana," 27.

[83] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 144.

discussed in detail later in this chapter) carried cartas de tocar "for lascivious purposes," alongside the bolsas de mandinga that protected him.[84] The inversion, here, is clear: while protecting his own body from both visibile and invisible piercings, Barreto's and Pereira's cartas de tocar also had the ability to open up others' "closed" bodies for his own sexual pleasure. Thus, the closing of their own bodies to unwanted external influences was performed at the expense of others' bodily autonomy, primarily women. This inversion was not only for men, however: in eighteenth-century Minas Gerais, a woman named Agueda Maria "had a paper with some words and crosses that she said was for touching men so that they would have illicit dealings with her."[85]

Julião works through the sexual-physical power of the bolsa de mandinga and the carta de tocar through Plate 23 in *Figurinhos Illuminados* (Figure 3.5). A *mulata* woman, wearing a bolsa de mandinga around her neck identical to that on the fruit-seller, coyly turns her head away as she is approached by an elderly, spectacled man. Leaning in to her, he pushes forth a letter, a visual and linguistic play on a *carta* ("letter") de tocar. It is addressed "Á Sra. Joanna Rosa" (To Mrs. Joanna Rosa), presumably the woman at left. Even if this is not her name, it would seem not to matter: the man's eyeglasses and quizzical look suggests that he cannot "see" or "read" the letter's contents, implying that the woman would need to touch (*tocar*) it in order to, in a sense, activate its words as visible – and thus activate the potential romantic relationship the man seems to desire. Ironically, it is another set of invisible papers that are working to protect the woman from the man's advances: the bolsa de mandinga around her neck, whose function to close her body from physical, spiritual, and here sexual incursions is activated by the very invisibility, and

[84] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross* 144.
[85] Ibid, 143-144.

thus illegibility, of the contents within it.

"Other Little Things"

We see, then, how bolsas de mandinga worked to undermine the aesthetic conditions of enslavement, as well as the performative manifestation of this condition: a combination of routinized violence, surveillance, and the shifting boundaries of sexual desire implicit within them. But recall once again the goal of many bolsas was to "fechar o corpo," a charge which included protections not only from physical, (and as I have argued, sexual) violence, but from spiritual forces as well. How would one go about proving the effectiveness of bolsas against spirits in public demonstrations? If these *feitiços*, these curses, commonly manifested themselves as illnesses, this would have been a difficult thing to prove in a public demonstration. Recall Siqueira's story where he called for a house slave to prove the bolsas' ability to protect from violence. I want to argue that the bolsas' effectiveness in protecting the enslaved body in this context is intimately related to what else was mentioned in Siqueira's deposition: the reference to the contents of Siqueira's pouch as "other little things."

In one sense, in noting the "other little things," in Siqueira's bolsa de mandinga, the Inquisition seemingly overlooks the potential ways in which the obscurity and exceptionality of the bag's contents contributed to a flight from visual enslavement. If as I have argued previously, the hypervisuality of the enslaved body is intertwined with its positioning as constantly subject to sexual-violent penetration, then the ability of the bolsa to completely "seal the body" by collapsing the distinction between the visible and the invisible would seem to be an effective tactic to escape not only enslavement, but the hypervisibile surveillance that conditions enslavement. Occasionally, this possibility of fleeing the master's vision, of escaping oversight

itself, was actually billed as potential power of the bolsa de mandinga. In 1737, Domingos, an enslaved man, offered a bolsa de mandinga to another slave named João Angola. This bolsa de mandinga, said Domingos, would allow João to flee his master's vision without being seen, in that it "allowed its owner to open locked doors and exit through them without being noticed."[86] In this way, João could potentially use bolsas de mandinga to escape the violence of his masters as well as his vision: the two aspects of visualized and violent oversight I argue are the conditions of enslavement.

Yet I would be shortsighted in arguing that bolsas de mandinga *only* existed to protect slaves from the violent aesthetic conditions of slavery. Everyone in the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic, especially enslaved Africans, lived in a world where spiritual ailments – *feitiços* – were everywhere, and these needed to be avoided as much as whips, knives, and guns. In this way, the contents of the bolsa de mandinga, while working to undermine the aesthetic conditions of enslavement, also point towards the invisibility (and thus potential ubiquity) of the spiritual forces from which they served to protect the wearer, spiritual forces that were not necessarily distinguishable from the political and social realities of enslaved life in the Portuguese Empire. These contents, then, were far from "other little things." Carefully-selected objects and substances protected the wearer in a world where physical and spiritual dangers were two sides of the same coin. But as I will argue, in some cases these substances actually worked across the world of spiritual dangers, the physical realities of enslavement in the Portuguese Empire, and the cultural evolution of African cultural practices in the wider Afro-Atlantic: crossings necessitated in a fractured Afro-Atlantic cultural sphere marked by both the persistence of African religions as well as their dynamic adaptability to difficult social and political realities. In

[86] Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 185.

working through these relationships, we now turn to a close examination of the contents of a single bolsa de mandinga, produced at the height of their popularity.

"Crossroads Objects": Bolsas de Mandinga and Intersecting Identities in the black Atlantic

José Francisco Pereira, a "native of Ouidah, on the Mina Coast," was denounced as a mandingueiro in Lisbon in 1730.[87] Enslaved as a young man, from Ouidah Pereira was sent to Pernambuco. Later sold to a different master in Rio de Janeiro, during his third decade he was sold again to another master in Minas Gerais.[88] In his late twenties, Pereira's third owner took him to Lisbon.[89] It was there Pereira emerged as a manufacturer of bolsas de mandinga in Portugal. Indeed, as soon as he arrived in Lisbon from Brazil, "many Negroes beleaguered him . . . so that he would give them mandingas, for he must have brought some from [Brazil]."[90] It actually seems as if Pereira's clients did not even wait to see if he knew how to make bolsas de mandinga before demanding them. Instead, given that he was an enslaved African from Brazil, they took it as a given he knew how to make bolsas, or at least possessed some. This high demand indicates, on one hand, that bolsas de mandinga were relatively scarce commodities in Portugal, or at least they were difficult for Africans to acquire. But high demand means high effectiveness as potent responses to social life for enslaved Africans in Lisbon in the 1720s. We have already seen why bolsas de mandinga emerged as effective weapons against the aesthetic

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[87] ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, Processo 11767. "Processo de José Francisco Pereira homem preto escravo de João Francisco Pedroso natural de Judá na Costa da Mina e morador nesta cidade de Lisboa."

[88] ANTT, Inquisição de Lisboa, Processo 11774. "Processo de José Francisco homem preto solteiro escravo de Domingos Francisco Pedroso homem de negócios natural de Judá na Costa da Mina e morador nesta cidade de Lisboa Ocidental." As cited in Vanicléia Silva Santos, *As bolsas de mandinga no espaço Atlântico* (Ph.D. diss., Universidade de São Paulo, 2008), 104.

[89] Santos, *As bolsas de mandinga no espaço Atlântico*, 104. See also Luiz R. B. Mott, "A vida mística e erotica do escravo José Francisco Pereira, 1705-1736." *Revista Tempo Brasileiro* 92/93 (1988): 85-104; and Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 134-136.

[90] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 135.

conditions of slavery and violence pervasive in the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic. Pereira, enslaved in Africa, sent through Brazil, and how arriving in Lisbon, knew this as well as anyone. In Lisbon he capitalized on this combination of scarcity and high demand, quickly entering into a small mandinga-making business with José Francisco Pedroso, another enslaved Mina man owned by Pereira's master's brother.[91] That Pereira's clients requested bolsas de mandinga specifically from him indicates that Africans in general did not know how to make bolsas, only Africans traveling through Brazil did. Pereira confessed as much in his trial, saying that he only learned how to make bolsas de mandinga in Brazil.

Pereira does not say where, or how, or from whom, he learned to make bolsas de mandinga. Perhaps, however, this seeming omission in Pereira's trial is actually quite specific. "In Brazil," leaves open space to account for the multiple intersecting identities, influences, life experiences, and jarring divisions that constituted enslaved life in colonial Brazil. In turn, it provides space to think through Pereira's biography not as a search for the "origins" of his practice, but rather as an unfinished, evolving history of cultural accumulations and disjunctures.[92] If the crossings of memory and history in the black Atlantic assert identity not as a final product but as always, as Paul Gilroy notes, "unfinished," then José Francisco Pereira, like many other enslaved Africans in the Atlantic world, "developed 'identity strategies' in which social actors, through assessing their situation, used their identity resources in a strategic

[91] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 134. James Sweet even speculates that it is possible that Pedroso and Pereira knew each other in Africa, given their close personal connection and common origins at the Ouidah slave port. See Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 184.

[92] On the "ruptures and discontinuities," of diasporic histories, and an attempt to work through collective identity as equally marked by points of "deep and significant difference," see Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Diaspora and Visual Culture: Representing Africans and Jews*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (New York: Routledge, 1999), 23.

manner, generally for the purpose of achieving some objective."[93] These "identity strategies," argues Luis Nicolau Parés, are marked by Africans' fluency in navigating multiple, often competing, markers of identity. In these contexts, "certain fluid and flexible diacritical signs are valued by virtue of their utility to a particular identification and according to the preferences and interests of the moment."[94]

If this characterization of identity formation in the black Atlantic sounds similar to the ways bolsas de mandinga both accumulated and incorporated foreign objects and substances in order to navigate the social realities of the Atlantic world, this mirroring is intentional. Reading Pereira's biography against the contents and practice of his bolsas de mandinga, I argue that Pereira carefully and strategically adopted, and adapted, cultural ideologies and aesthetic practices to navigate the political and aesthetic conditions of enslavement he encountered in both Brazil and Portugal. The bolsa de mandinga emerged as a perfect locus for these crossings, in that it accumulated a wide range of empowered substances inside a pouch that, as we have seen, used its retreat from the visual as a condition of its magical potency. These strategic anti-slavery aesthetics of Pereira's bolsas de mandinga emerge as functional and powerful both for their political resonance, as well as their adaptability. They are powerful, in that sense, precisely because they were not created as direct responses to enslavement – they provided spaces of retreat, as well as direct confrontations to the condition.

In this section, I trace three interrelated themes. First, I try to reconstruct, albeit speculatively, Pereira's biography, from his birth in west Africa, through his enslavement in Brazil, and finally his arrival and mandinga-practice in Portugal. Second, I weave his biography

[93] On "unfinished" identities in the black Atlantic, see Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 1. On "identity strategies" for Africans in the wider Atlantic, see Parés, *A formação do Candomblé*, 15.
[94] Parés, *A formação do Candomblé*, 15.

through the background of the symbols, objects, and substances he incorporated into his bolsas de mandinga in Lisbon: aesthetic accumulations whose malleability and fluidity act both as mirrors to, and projectors of, Pereira's accumulative and divisive life history. Finally, I seek to work through debates over the extent to which we can position the bolsa de mandinga as a product of African cultural resistance or as a container for the persistence of African cognitive orientations in the wider Atlantic world.

Productively for my purposes here, Rachel Harding reflects on the constant flux of the bolsa da mandinga's name, shifting contents, and geographic interstices, to provocatively describe them as "crossroads" objects, infused "with meaning that encases and expresses the tensions and values of its interstitial location."[95] In traversing the Atlantic world, in responding both to the individual pressures of slavery and global capitalism, as well as the need and desire to form a collective community in Africa, Brazil, and Portugal, Pereira's bolsas de mandinga testify to the political economy of the pervasiveness of African religious practices in the wider Atlantic. For Harding, "crossroads objects," are African not in that their specific contents are traceable to African geographic space or cultural practice, but reflect a larger framework where African understandings of ritual persist through "plasticity with constancy" that provide space for African religions to continue through even seemingly hybrid or syncretic cultural practices in the Americas.[96] What Pereira's bolsas also provide, then, is a pathway to distinguish between the persistence of African cognitive worldviews in the minds and practices of enslaved Africans in the Americas, and the persistence of African religions through ritual practices or objects. I find this distinction central to my argument: that the cultural fluidity and malleability of African

[95] Harding, *A Refuge in Thunder*, 30.
[96] Ibid, 19.

religious practice, and by extension the contents of bolsas de mandinga (especially in Pereira's hands), were precisely the aspects that helped both to not only persist in the Atlantic world, but made them key agents and weapons to undermine the aesthetic conditions of slavery. It is the ability of the bolsa de mandinga to work across this distinction that, as Pereira seems to have known quite well, allows it to work through wide understandings of African religion while it navigates the confusing and often violent social life of Portuguese colonial slavery.

Searching for Africa in Bolsas de Mandinga

When asked the purpose of the bolsas de mandinga he made, José Francisco Pedroso, Pereira's partner, responded that they served "to protect from knife slashes."[97] While this function of bolsas de mandinga should now be clear, we have not yet seen precisely how bolsas performed this function, or what substances were used to this end. Pereira's inquisition record helps to answer this question, as it contains detailed notes not only on the substances Pereira used to "protect from knife slashes," but also how he activated (or consecrated) the objects and substances inside.[98] Laura de Mello e Souza summarizes Pereira's bolsas in this way:

> "The pouches were made of cloth, almost always white, and were basically intended to protect their bearers from knife or gunshot wounds. They contained flint stones, onyx, sulfur, gunpowder, a lead bullet, a silver *vintém*, a dead man's bone, and . . . writings that were supposed to have spent time under an altar stone. The papers were covered in letters and figures written with the blood of a white or sometimes black chicken or else with the blood of José Francisco's left arm. The

[97] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 125.
[98] Ibid, 135-136.

> prayer of St. Mark was also included . . . Once ready, the bag was fumigated with incense. Sometimes the contents were buried at midnight and then dug up before being placed in the bag."[99]

Based on this description, Roger Sansi argues that bolsas were not "objects of African resistance against the Portuguese empire and slavery" because the "actual material components of these pouches . . . were not necessarily African," and instead were typically "Catholic."[100] Pereira's consecration of bolsas under Catholic altars, and his incorporation of Catholic prayers like that of Saint Mark seemingly speaks to the close association of Pereira's bolsas with Catholic rites and a longer tradition of Catholic reliquaries: another example of the ways in which bolsas de mandinga adapted across new cultural contexts and social problems.[101] A drawing taken from one of Pereira's bolsas, held at the Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo in Lisbon, similarly indicates the incorporation of Catholic iconography (Figure 3.6). A black cross dominates the image, topped with the letters "INRI" to explicitly mark it as the site of Jesus' crucifixion. This indicates that Pereira was both conversant in, and willing to utilize, Catholic iconography and symbolism to give power to his bolas to protect from bodily injury.

But what did "Catholic" mean to José Francisco Pereira? And how would he have understood the relationship, or distinction, between "African" and "Catholic" ritual practices during the course of his life? On one hand, as James Sweet reminds us, the integration of Catholic symbolism, writing, and iconography into bolsas does not necessarily mean that Pereira specifically, or Africans generally, were integrating Catholic belief systems into their worldviews, or into the bolsas de mandinga.[102] Details of Pereira's biography paint a complex

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[99] Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross*, 135-136.
[100] Sansi, "Sorcery and Fetishism in the Modern Atlantic," 24.
[101] Santos, *As bolsas de mandinga no espaço Atlântico*, 200.
[102] Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 185.

picture of how he may have understood the role of Catholic iconography and ritual practice in both his life and his bolsas de mandinga. The declaration of origin on the cover of Pereira's inquisition record – "native of Ouidah, on the Mina Coast" – belies the complexity of Pereira's life story, one characterized by shifting and intersecting identities, as well as the multiple crossings between Brazil and Africa that marked mandingueiros with such suspicion in the eyes of Portuguese inquisitors. If, as Pereira's inquisitors wrote, he was a "native of Ouidah," then he was metaphorically born at the moment he entered the holding cells of the Portuguese slave port at Ouidah, at the moment his flesh met the hot branding iron that marked him as the property of his new Portuguese owners. At this time, around 1717, he was likely between ten and fifteen years old.[103]

From his transferal to a Portuguese ship at Ouidah, Pereira joined thousands of other captives enslaved from across the Mina Coast, a term that the Portuguese applied to a politically diverse swath of land between Elmina Castle, in present-day Ghana, across Togo and Benin, to southwestern Nigeria.[104] Pereira would have shared broad cultural commonalities with other enslaved captives at the Ouidah port. *Gbe* was the universal term for the language spoken in

[103] It seems likely Pereira was enslaved between these ages, calculating backwards for the time he spent in Brazil, and his approximate age (25) when arriving in Lisbon. Further supporting this conclusion, James Sweet notes that Portuguese traders on the Mina Coast "believed that 'children ten to fifteen years old' were 'the best captives.'" Sweet, *Domingos Álvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual Politics of the Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 29. Luiz Mott makes the firmest case for Pereira's biography in terms of birth and death years; see Mott, "A vida mística e erotica do escravo José Francisco Pereira," 85-104.

[104] It is worth noting here that "Mina" is a term of some debate. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, for example, understands "Mina" as I do, encompassing southeastern Ghana, Togo, Benin, and the "Mahi" region up to the Nigerian border. See Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 114-116. Robin Law, however, takes a more conservative view, restricting "Mina" to the immediate area around Elmina Castle, concluding that in the term's original usage it "is questionable whether it ever denoted Gbe-speakers as distinct from speakers of Akan." See Law, "Ethnicities of Enslaved Africans in the Diaspora: On the Meanings of 'Mina' (Again)." *History in Africa* 32 (2005): 248. Nevertheless, at least in Portugal and Brazil, the Portuguese labeled Gbe-speakers transported through Ouidah as "Mina." Pereira was one of these, as was Domingos Álvares, the *vodunon* healer enslaved during the expansion of the Kingdom of Dahomey and sent to Brazil; see Sweet, *Domingos Álvares*. These two biographies indicate that the Portuguese understood the Kingdom of Dahomey and the Ouidah port, as well as the Mahi region to the east, as part of the "Costa da Mina."

various dialects by the combinations of Adja, Ewe, and Fon peoples who lived in Dahomey, Ouidah, and Mahi.[105] In turn, Gbe formed the basis for a common lingua-franca among the enslaved in both Ouidah, as well as in the slave communities and plantations to which they were destined in Brazil.[106] Many captives, as Gbe-speakers, were also *vodunsis* – servants of *voduns*, a class of spirits across the Gbe-speaking region, whose worship continued in Brazil.[107]

Taking the Gbe-language area's range of voduns as a starting point, Didier Lahon traces Pereira's bolsas de mandinga to his "cultural zone" of the Mina Coast. Lahon argues that the design and consecration practices of Pereira's bolsa drawing in Figure 3.6 owe much to Yorùbá religion, as well as close ties to current manifestations of west African vodun in Haiti.[108] In particular, Lahon emphasizes Pereira's use of altar stones to activate his bolsas, as well as his inclusions of flint stones inside the bags – two types of stones associated with the Yorùbá orisha of thunder, Shango.[109] Lahon also finds the figure of Eshu, the intermediary being between humans and the orishas, in the skull and crossbones at the base of the large cross in Pereira's bolsa image.[110] Finally, Lahon notes similarities between Pereira's representation of a pillar to the right of the central crucifix, arguing it functions as a *poto-mitan*, the ritual pillar connecting the worlds of the living and the spirits during Haitian vodou rituals.[111]

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[105] Sweet, *Domingos Álvares*, 58; Parés, *A formação do Candomblé*, 14.
[106] Ibid.
[107] On the continued worship of voduns in Brazil, see Sweet, *Domingos Álvares*, and Parés, *A formação do Candomblé*. However, as Sweet notes, we should be careful not to confuse the cultural similarity of the Gbe-language area with political agreement, or vice versa (*Domingos Álvares*, 14). Especially in the first decades of the eighteenth century, the Gbe-language region (roughly contiguous with the Portuguese designation of the Mina Coast, which also included Twi-speakers from southeastern Ghana) was marked by shifting political alliances and warfare in which many were imprisoned, enslaved and sold to European traders on the coast. For a beautiful and nuanced description of the warfare, politics, and internal structure of the slave trade between Dahomey and Ouidah in the 1720s, see Sweet, "Dahomey" in *Domingos Álvares*, 9-26. Pereira's enslavement was likely a byproduct of these wars, but we have little information to know exactly why or where he was enslaved.
[108] Lahon, "Inquisição, pacto com o demônio e 'magia' Africana,"37.
[109] Ibid, 36.
[110] Ibid, 39.
[111] Ibid.

While Lahon is right to look for the obscured persistence of African religious practice in Pereira's bolsas, we must be careful not to confuse the region of Pereira's birth with the broad spectrum of cultural experiences and situations through which he developed his magical and ritual practices. Recall that Pereira was likely enslaved between the ages of ten and fifteen, as was preferred by Portuguese traders at the time.[112] While in general we can assume that in some capacity his family or village worshiped one or many voduns, Pereira's young age at the time of capture means he likely would have been too young to have progressed very far through the initiation ranks. At the same time, the years Pereira spent in west Africa were characterized by the changing dynamics of vodun worship, with political instability, famine, and disease contributing to the migration of, and formation of, new spirits. Even if he had some formal initiation into the religious system, this larger political-religious context potentially would have predisposed Pereira, as James Sweet has argued for the eighteenth century *vodunon* (vodun priest) and healer Domingos Álvares, to be accepting and even welcoming of new spirits, including Catholic ritual and the Catholic god.[113]

When Pereira arrived in Pernambuco, central African divination and healing rituals were firmly established in northeastern Brazil, given central Africans' numerical dominance in the region over the previous century.[114] Up to the beginning of the eighteenth century, roughly eighty percent of all Africans arriving in Pernambuco came from "Angola," a broad swath of west central Africa that encompassed the area around Luanda and the mouth of the Congo River. Pereira himself was part of a larger Mina influx into the region. In the 1720s, central Africans had been reduced to one fifth of the arrivals in Pernambuco. This is still a significant number, but

[112] Sweet, *Domingos Álvares,* 29.
[113] Ibid, 47-48.
[114] Ibid, 61.

dwarfed by arrivals from the Mina Coast who made up nearly all of the remaining traffic into Pernambuco.[115] This means that Pereira would also have met a fluid conception of religious practice in Brazil, where Catholic ritual and iconography could be incorporated into, and re-imagined as, vodun worship. In 1740, for example, a group of enslaved and freed blacks in Recife were found to be committing "abominable rites" before an image of Christ, laid on the ground and decorated with flowers – a ritual which, as Sweet argues, is strongly suggestive of a vodun temple, and one where Christ has been reimagined and reincorporated as a vodun himself.[116] In this way, in Pernambuco Pereira entered a larger context where African religion and Catholicism were not necessarily opposed. Indeed, Africans from both west and central Africa began to integrate Catholic symbolism and doctrine into their own religious systems.

In reading the contents and iconography of Pereira's bolsas against Pereira's own biography, it seems likely that Pereira capitalized on this fluidity of vodun worship vis-à-vis Catholicism to similarly incorporate central African ritual into his own worldview, particularly given the aforementioned dominance of central Africans in Pernambuco, as well as the already firm-establishment of central African ritual communities in the region (as opposed to vodun groups, which were still struggling to gain a foothold). After leaving Pernambuco, Pereira was sent to Rio de Janeiro, a thriving city which would have put him in contact mostly with western central Africans. Gold and diamonds had been discovered in the interior Brazilian provinces of Minas Gerais and Goiás at the beginning of the 1720s.[117] Many slaves coming in to Rio de Janeiro were sent directly to the mines in Minas Gerais, with slave importers in Rio constructing

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[115] Sweet, *Domingos Álvares,* 61.
[116] Ibid, 63.
[117] On the gold mining and presence of central Africans in Goiás, see Mary C. Karasch, "Central Africans in Central Brazil, 1780-1835," in *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, ed. Linda M. Heywood (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 117-152.

an efficient trade between Luanda and Rio de Janeiro to work the mines in central Brazil. Thus, likely being sent to Rio and then to Minas Gerais, Pereira followed a course that was filled with slaves coming directly from the lower Congo basin, and the homeland of Kongo religious practice. It is likely that Pereira's time in Rio de Janeiro and Minas Gerais would have exposed him to many central Africans: over 95% of the Africans disembarking in Rio de Janeiro were from west central Africa, with many of these later going to Minas Gerais during a period of very high slave demand with the rise of gold and diamond mining operations there during the 1720s, at the likely time Pereira was there.[118]

What this suggests, then, is that Pereira's general understanding of religious fluidity allowed him to understand voduns, Catholic gods, and central African ritual practices all as potential powers to incorporate into his bolsas de mandinga as he learned to make them across Brazil. Yet the numerical dominance of central Africans in the areas in which he traveled, combined with Pereira's lack of formal religious training, similarly suggest it is possible that Pereira's *primary* religious influences were from the region of the Congo basin. But at the moment, this is conjecture. However, through a detailed reading of the contents of Pereira's bolsas, the methods in which he consecrated them, and an iconographic analysis of one of the images found inside one of his bolsas, my argument, I believe, rests on a much stronger foundation: that José Francisco Pereira, originally from the Mina Coast, learned to make bolsas de mandinga in Brazil from Africans conversant in Kongo religion and iconography, and that the historical interplay and parallel practice of Catholicism and Kongo religion in west central Africa allowed Pereira to produce bolsas that are, on one hand, nominally Catholic while remaining

[118] Joseph C. Miller, "Central Africa During the Era of the Slave Trade, c. 1490s-1850s," in *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, ed. Heywood, 31; and Kalle Kananoja, *Central African Identities and Religiosity in Colonial Minas Gerais* (Turku: Uniprint, 2012), 37-38.

visibly Kongo. Thus, when Sansi declares the contents of the bolsas as Catholic, this is not necessarily in opposition to when Harding and Sweet read them as evidence of the persistence of African worldviews through hybrid-parallel cultural practices. Indeed, this cunning interchange allows Pereira to re-imagine African religious practice in a larger Atlantic context, repurposing Catholic and African iconographies and consecration practices to produce bolsas de mandinga that similarly adapt to shifting social realities that crossed the aesthetic conditions of enslavement in the wider Atlantic world.

Vanicléia Silva Santos was the first to suggest that Pereira's drawing acts at the intersection of "manifestations of Bakongo and Catholic religiosities," and a "vision of the world of the Bakongo, learned in contact with central Africans."[119] While previously I alluded to the potential power of written words for Africans from non-literate societies, painstaking research by Bárbaro Martínez-Ruiz, has shown that Kongo graphic writing, as evidenced in Pereira's bolsa image, conveys striking evidence of the high comprehensibility, narrative structure, and religious symbolism that also "speaks" to those who know how to read the system. In short, Pereira's image functions as a cosmogram, defined by Martínez-Ruiz as a compound accumulation of signs and symbols with a narrative function, meant to allude "to knowledge with implications in the metaphysical, philosophical, and religious realm," and in this way to map the religious universe in terms of interactions with the physical and spirit worlds.[120] One must emphasize that these are not simply groups of signs: these are narrative structures meant to tell a story, and to invoke certain requests and protections as determined by the maker and the user.[121]

The origins of Kongo graphic writing can be traced back to the rupestrian symbols

[119] Santos, *As bolsas de mandinga no espaço Atlântico*, 200-201.
[120] Bárbaro Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013), 47.
[121] Ibid, 48.

contained in caves (called Lovo) throughout Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo which emerged in tandem with Catholic influence and evangelization in the Kongo region.[122] Of primary importance among Lovo site symbols, as well as contemporary manifestations of Kongo religious practice throughout central Africa and its diasporic manifestations in Cuba (Palo Monte) and Brazil (*pontos riscados* in Umbanda) is the *dikenga* (Figure 3.7).[123] Geoffrey Heimlich, for example, has located a group of dikenga symbols, carbon-dated to between 1633 and 1804, a range in line with Portuguese presence on the coast.[124]

Kongo religious practice conceives of the Bakongo living in two lands, two mountains separated by a great sea. One of these mountains is the domain of the visible, the physically present, and the tangible. This is the black land, domain of all that lives: *nza yayi*. Across the mighty sea, the *kalunga*, the mirrored watery barrier that both unites and separated the two mountains, there is the white world, *mpemba*, the domain of the invisible, ethereal spirits, factory of magic and power. In the life of a Kongo man or woman, they will travel to both these worlds – entering into *nza yayi* at their physical birth, reaching the height of their lives and pinnacle of existence, and then slowly descending into death. The death of the physical body, the *nitu*, only frees the inner body, the spirit *nsala*, to be reborn in the land of *mpemba*. Here they live again in the domain of the spirits, waiting to be born into the physical world once more.

The dikenga, manifested as a crossing of two lines, is the earthly manifestation of the Kongo worldview, representing the *tendwa kia nza-kongo*, the Kongo cosmogram, the symbol of

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[122] Paul Raymaekers and Hendrik van Moorsel, "Lovo: Dessins rupestres du Bas-Congo." *Ngonge, Carnets de sciences humaines* 12, 13, and 14 (1962): 12-14. As cited in Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign*, 52.

[123] Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign*, 68. On *pontos riscados* and their use in Umbanda in the context of wider black Atlantic religious practice, see Robert Farris Thompson, *Face of the Gods: Art and Altars of Africa and the African Americas* (New York: The Museum for African Art, 1993).

[124] Geoffrey Heimlich, "Rock Art as a Source for the History of the Kongo Kingdom," in *Kongo across the Waters*, ed. Susan Cooksey, Robin Poynor, and Hein Vanhee (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013), 35.

the Four Moments of the Sun.[125] The dikenga's top half is nza yayi, the black domain of physical existence, while the bottom half is mpemba, the white world of the spirits. The navigation of the permeable, watery barrier between these two realms is paramount to the ritual efficacy of Kongo sacred objects, and so the crossing of these two planes of existence, the intersection of these pathways, is at the heart of Kongo religious practice. This dualistic conception of human life, the interchange between the physical and the spiritual, the living and the dead, and the permeability between these two realms informs almost all aspects of Kongo ritual, religion, and social structure. For Robert Farris Thompson, "In Kongo, there is scarcely an initiation or ritual transformation of the person from one level of existence to another that does not take its patterning from the circle of the sun about the Earth."[126] As such, the dikenga works to bring forth the possibilities at the intersection of the land of the living and the land of the spirits. Kongo religion continues to utilize the dikenga to navigate this powerful interchange, as the invocation of the spirits of the dead remains vital to Kongo religion in Africa and the Americas. It is here that Harding's formulation of the "crossroads object" takes on a second layer of significance, as the cosmogram itself, manifested as a cross, marks both the crossroads between the world of the living and the world of the dead, as well as, as I will argue, the crossings of European and African religious practice in the Americas.

An African Catholicism?

In 1483, Diego Cão, a Portuguese explorer, arrived at Mbanza Kongo (now in northern Angola), capital of the Kongo Kingdom. He was the first non-African ever to see the city, yet the

[125] Robert Farris Thompson, *The Four Moments of the Sun: Kongo Art in Two Worlds* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981).
[126] Ibid, 43.

presence of he and his countrymen had a profound impact on the social, political, religious, and artistic life of the kingdom.[127] Only eight years later, following the establishment of productive diplomatic ties and trade relations between Portugal and Kongo, King Nzinga a Nkuwu (later João I) converted to Catholicism and declared it as the Kongo state religion.[128] The Kongo Kingdom would remain a Catholic state in name until its collapse in the middle of the seventeenth century. Though it has been argued that the potency of Catholicism as the state religion fell into moderate decline soon after Afonso I Mvemba Nzinga's death in 1543, Catholicism continued to persist as a detectable cultural force in the region, practiced alongside the Bakongo religious beliefs that persist in Angola and Congo today.[129] But how was it possible for a foreign European religion to so quickly impose itself on an African empire after less than a decade of meaningful contact? We can return to the Kongo cosmogram for the answer to this question.

Today, in some manifestations the dikenga is called *yowa* (Figure 3.8). In this context, Martínez-Ruiz states, it emerges as similar to a Catholic cross or crucifix, a union which results directly "from syncretic religious practices in Central Africa."[130] Robert Farris Thompson is careful to note, however, that the *yowa* "does not signify the crucifixion of Jesus for the salvation of mankind; it signifies the equally compelling vision of the circular motion of human souls about the circumference of its intersecting lines."[131] The yowa, then, developed as a historical

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[127] John K. Thornton, "The Origins and Early History of the Kingdom of Kongo, c. 1350-1550." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34:1 (2001): 89.
[128] John K. Thornton, "The Development of an African Catholic Church in the Kingdom of the Kongo, 1491-1750." *The Journal of African History* 25:2 (1984): 148.
[129] David Birmingham, "Central Africa from Cameroun to Zambezi," in *The Cambridge History of Africa*, *Volume 4: c. 1600 – c. 1790*, ed. Richard Gray. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975: 332.
[130] Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign*, 69.
[131] Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 108

and cultural response not only to Catholic influence among the Bakongo, but also as a way of interpreting the Christian cross through Bakongo belief, and utilizing Catholic iconography as another mode of expression in Bakongo religious thought. Just as Kongo worldviews require the presence of intermediaries between the physical and spirit worlds, Christ is seen in Catholic thought as both human and divine. Thus, Christ and the Christian cross could be interpreted through longstanding Kongo belief systems, and emerged as especially potent symbols in Kongo due to their ambiguous nature with respect to the divide between physical humanity and the spiritual realm.

This articulation of Kongo religious practice through Catholic iconography gave rise to an artistic tradition that read Catholicism through Kongo lenses, thus producing imagery that was salient to both Catholic and Kongo worldviews. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we see the beginnings of the production of Kongo-made Catholic crosses, as well as other examples of Catholic iconography in Kongo art (Figure 3.9).[132] As Cécile Fromont has argued,

> "Kongo crucifixes were the result of a generative process in which European religious ideas and artistic modes of representation were brought into dialogue with central African visual and religious syntax. In the course of this recombination, new meanings were created that surpassed and redefined both Catholic and central African ideas and symbols from a novel, Kongo Christian perspective."[133]

[132] Arthur P. Bourgeois, "Christian Imagery in African Art." *African Arts* 14:3 (1982): 82.
[133] Cécile Fromont, "Dance, Image, Myth, and Conversion in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1500-1800." *African Arts* 44:4 (Winter 2011): 52-53.

Even at the time these crucifixes were produced, notes John Thornton, "Kongolese were proud to call themselves Catholics."[134] At the same time, some Bakongo readily understood the ways in which they used these crucifixes as manifestations of Kongo religious practice, independent of the Catholic iconography used. For example, in 1704, Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita, a Kongo woman claiming to be the earthly manifestation of Saint Anthony, began a religious movement which claimed that Jesus, Mary, and Saint Francis – among others – were actually born in the Kingdom of Kongo. She linked her religious aspirations to a restorationist political movement, where she called for King Pedro IV to re-occupy the then-ruined capital city of São Salvador (Mbanza-Kongo) and restore the kingdom from the disastrous civil wars that had plagued the region, while at the same time founding a new Kongolese Christianity devoid of Kongo religious influence. Kimpa Vita's traditionalist project was also anti-syncretic, as she publicly burned not only Kongo religious objects, but also crucifixes, claiming that they were being used as Kongo religious symbols.[135] Kimpa Vita's story demonstrates that, even in the Kongo Kingdom, bakongo were using the Catholic crucifix as a conduit symbol for the persistence of Kongo religion. The date on this is key: 1704 is, as I have estimated, only one year prior to Pereira's birth in the Mina Coast. This suggests that the enslaved central Africans Pereira met in Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro, and Minas Gerais would have come from an understanding of religion in Kongo that already explicitly utilized the Catholic crucifix as a Kongo religious symbol.

Yet how do we understand this perspective in the minds of Bakongo who were enslaved

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[134] John K. Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony: Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita and the Antonian Movement, 1684-1706* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 18.

[135] Jason R. Young, *Rituals of Resistance: African Atlantic Religion in Kongo and the Lowcountry South in the Era of Slavery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011), 116. For a detailed biography and the historical context of Beatriz Kimpa Vita's movement, see Thornton, *The Kongolese Saint Anthony*.

and transported to the Americas? This is a fertile ground of investigation for scholars, giving rise to competing ideas on the extent to which one can think of Kongo religion as *already* hybrid or syncretic once it arrived in the Americas in the minds and practices of enslaved Africans from the Kongo region. It is true that, as a result of religious conflation and Portuguese presence in central Africa following João I's conversion, many central Africans may have converted to Catholicism even prior to the beginning of the transatlantic slave trade, and such conversions were called "Christian." As a result, John K. Thornton describes this syncretic belief system as one that helped give rise to a new Afro-Atlantic religion called Christianity in name, while remaining one that could "both satisfy European and African understandings of religion."[136] Therefore, Thornton argues, Christian conversion was not simply a process of the forced conversion to a European worldview in the Americas, but was already pre-figured as a syncretic and strategic cultural paradigm *prior* to Christian conversion in the Brazilian colony.

Yet Sweet remains firmly opposed to characterizations of "African Christianity," especially in reference to Kongo cosmology. For Sweet, discussing such a religious system as hybrid (which Thornton does for Africa, and Souza continues for Brazil) is incorrect because it ignores importance epistemological differences in worldview, as well as the parallel (rather than overlapping or conquering) fashion in which the two religious systems – Catholic and Kongo – operated.[137] Rather than seeing them as hybrid, it is better to think of them as parallel, with practitioners being competent in, and being able to switch between, the two depending on social circumstance, yet still understanding the differences between them.[138] The maintenance of such a cognitive distinction assured the persistence of strong African worldviews both in Atlantic

[136] John K. Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 235, 255.
[137] Sweet, *Recreating Africa,* 113.
[138] Ibid, 113-115.

Kongo and through the transatlantic slave trade to Brazil.

Making this distinction between the hybrid/syncretic and the parallel allows Sweet to painstakingly point out the social and cultural practices Africans took with them across the Atlantic to Brazil, particularly religious practices: "African religions were not syncretic or creolized but were independent systems of thought, practiced in parallel to Catholicism."[139] But such parallel religious systems were not unique to Africans: Brazilians of European descent employed similarly bi-religious systems in their personal lives. In many cases, Portuguese creoles in Brazil were "sometimes quick to adopt African religious practices in order to address the secular and temporal needs that Christian prayer and faith could not immediately address . . . ultimately, whites accepted certain African religious practices even as they maintained their essential Catholic cores."[140] However, the use of African practices did not create an identity crisis, nor did it allow others to assert claims of religious purity or authenticity. Rather, the parallel religious practices circulating in Brazil functioned like a cultural currency, with various types and methods able to be used at any given time, and with each Brazilian – regardless of ethnic affiliation – able to use systems they saw fit. As such, as Henry Drewal has argued for all of Afro-Brazilian art, "This is not religious 'syncretism,' which suggests a sort of blending, homogenizing process. Rather it documents an openness to the simultaneous interplay of multiple beliefs and practices of persons whose histories demanded a refined, subtle, and effective flexibility."[141]

While any religious practitioner in Brazil or otherwise would have been able, as Sweet

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[139] Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 7.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Henry John Drewal, "Signifyin' Saints: Sign, Substance, and Subversion in Afro-Brazilian Art," in *Santería Aesthetics in Contemporary Latin American Art*, ed. Arturo Lindsay (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996), 263.

demonstrates, to effectively and decisively differentiate between the two religious systems, this does not mean that ritual practices themselves did not emerge as hybrid cultural products. Even if a religious object or ritual was produced as a cultural hybrid, this does not mean that individuals necessarily had their own worldviews confounded as a result of the dynamic integration of new symbols and objects into ritual practice. In making this distinction I insist we remain able to differentiate influences inside of objects themselves, and assure that specific individuals participating in a ritual or using an object would be able to pull out, project, or invent specific aspects of it that related to their own cognitive worldviews. What this means is that, even in the absence of all obvious African cultural survivals, cognitive orientations and worldviews can still persist in and through seemingly hybrid cultural practices, thus allowing a hybrid cultural space to be the very location of diasporic consciousness and continuity; in other words, the "African" character of objects and ritual practices still persists in the complete absence of seemingly African objects.

Pereira and the Re-Imaging of Kongo Religion in the Atlantic

We can return, then, to Pereira's image, reading through its iconographic content, as well as its ritual efficacy in relationship to the other objects used inside his bolsas de mandinga. On one hand, Pereira depicts a typical Catholic cross, marked at top with the letters INRI used to signify the identity of Jesus Christ on his own crucifix. Yet, the rest of the image utilizes particular choices of Kongo graphic writing to facilitate the bolsa de mandinga's goal of protecting the wearer from not only the violence of knives and weapons, but also the everyday violence of slavery in the Portuguese Empire. Compare, for example, the iconography of Pereira's image to a contemporary *firma* ("signature") produced by Osvaldo Fresneda Bachiller,

a *palero* (practitioner of Palo Monte) active in Havana (Figure 3.10).[142] In Palo, firmas are accumulations of narrative signs, "used in conjunction with religious objects and oral traditions" in order to activate the powers of the spirit world, and thus activate the powers of an object.[143] Through a firma called *El Contracto de la Caverna Secreta* ("The Contract of the Secret Cavern"), Fresneda activates a treaty between the spirits and the living in order to gain access to religious secrets hidden inside a cave. At top, a sunburst with a drawn face indicates the presence of *Nzambi a Mpungu*, the name given to almighty God in Bakongo thought, who is analogized to the sun as it, like Nzambi, represents "the infinity of life," in that it constantly rises and sets.[144]

Throughout the Kongo religious diaspora, Nzambi is always located at the top center or top left of firmas. It is no concidence, then, that Nzambi is also present at the top left of Pereira's image, his drawn face and sunburst rays watching over Pereira's mapping of the crucifix-as-dikenga. Similarly, in Fresneda's firma, the dikenga is located directly below Nzambi. This presence of Nzambi at the pinnacle of the cosmogram contrasts to another symbol present in both Fresneda's and Pereira's firmas: a skull and crossbones, drawn both times below the dikenga. Here, the skull and crossbones indicates the presence of the ancestors, spirits who must be invoked in order to activate the ritual function of either the firma, in Fresneda's case, or the bolsa de mandinga, in Pereira's.[145] Thus, while seemingly showing a typical Catholic crucifix, Pereira essentially maps the Kongo worldview. Invoking Nzambi and the ancestors through the presence of the dikenga as imagined through a Catholic cross, Pereira's image acts at this intersection by "radiating energy" (marked through the presence of two radiating lines from the

[142] Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign*, 12.
[143] Ibid, 49. "Firma" is the word for these narrative agglomerations only in Palo, but I use the term for both Kongo and Palo here for ease of reading and reference.
[144] Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign*, 76, 138.
[145] Ibid, 140.

cross at center) outward from the image, and outward to the users of the bolsa.[146]

While the general conception of the relationship between Nzambi, the ritual efficacy of spiritual invocation, and the activation of physical objects form a general mode of interpretation for Kongo graphic writing, it is important to note that firmas are unique to individuals, constructed based on personal problems and desires, with shifting meanings based on context and personal use.[147] As such, the meanings of symbols used in the bolsa de mandinga are *intended* to be flexible and adaptable to different locations, circumstances, and personal desires.[148] Fluency in such a graphic system, which Martínez-Ruiz estimates involved four or five thousand symbols in possibly endless combinations, requires a lifetime of study. In its current manifestations in Congo, laypeople generally learn only the symbols of Kongo graphic writing that are most common and easily accessible. Unsurprisingly, these are those included in Pereira's image: Nzambi as the sun, the skull and crossbones of the ancestors, and the dikenga. Among the diasporic manifestations of Kongo religious practice, only Palo Monte has developed a regimented and hierarchical priesthood where the meanings and access of the symbols are restricted based on initiation level.[149] Either way, Pereira did not have a lifetime to learn Kongo graphic writing: he had scarcely ten years at most, analogous to something of a crash course in Kongo-Catholic cosmology repurposed for his own personal use in the bolsa de mandinga.

Yet, Pereira's crash course was a necessary one in a context of changing masters, constant geographic uprooting, and the pervasive violence of colonial life in Brazil. While on his bolsa de mandinga image the ancestors, Nzambi, and the dikenga are all invoked in black – the color of physical existence – those things which enact violence are drawn in red, in the blood of

[146] Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign*, 140.
[147] Ibid, 125.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Ibid, 129-130.

either sacrificed chickens or Pereira's own left arm. In Kongo thought, red is the color used to invoke the kalunga, the barrier between the physical and spiritual worlds, and thus this color's presence seeks to counteract the efficacy of the symbols represented in it through the invocation of ancestral spirits. Here, Pereira largely departs from the lexicon of Kongo graphic writing to present a series of figures which would have been most salient to either his own personal experience, or the ritual desires of other enslaved Africans in Lisbon. In Pereira's drawing, two crudely drawn human figures, at either side of center, hold up bows and arrows and swords: dangerous weapons from which the bolsa was meant to protect the wearer. And at top left, Pereira has drawn one of a class of symbols known as *ndinda i sinsú*, secular graphics used at the intersection of agricultural, hunting, and traveling purposes. This one, called *dionga*, marks the path one takes to find an animal killed by a hunter, and it still used in Mbanza-Kongo in northwest Angola (Figure 3.11).[150] Here, Pereira analogizes the spot of killing an animal to that of killing or harming a human, rendering it in red to overcome the marking of violence contained within it. Finally, Pereira included at lower left a symbol that would have been familiar in Kongo as well as to enslaved Africans in Brazil and Lisbon: the crest of the Portuguese Empire. As such, as a man enslaved and sold to the Portuguese, uprooted from his home and taken across Brazil, and now finally under threat of torture by the Portuguese Inquisition, Pereira may have not only intended this bolsa de mandinga to protect from systemic physical violence, but also the very power structures responsible for its perpetuation.

In this context, it is necessary to think with Pereira's document not just as an isolated text, but as a spiritually-imbued object working in unison with the bolsa de mandinga's other contents. This is, after all, the role of Kongo symbols in central Africa, and firmas in Cuban Palo

[150] Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign*, 92, 99.

Monte. Firmas are spiritual activation performed, calling forth spirits into ritual assemblages of objects to imbue them with activating power. Without firmas, *prendas* (ritual assemblages) cannot incorporate spirits, and thus will not function properly. In this way, Pereira's firma works to activate the other ritual substances found in his bolsa, almost all of which, I argue, have direct Kongo analogies.

In Bakongo thought, an *nkisi* (plural *minkisi*) is both a physical container for magical substances used to produce a desired effect, as well as the activated ancestral spirits present inside the container. Yet the spirits do not inhabit just any objects: nkisi are filled with *bilongo*, a group of substances valued for their ritual potency, whose combined presence works to invoke the necessary spirits from across the kalunga to achieve a desired effect. These minkisi take many forms, including horns, hollowed-out gourds, large packets or pouches, or statues known as *nkondi*. Still popular among paleros today is a type of nkisi called *makuta*, a portable personal pouch containing apotropaic substances; in other words, a direct analogy to the bolsa de mandinga. Yet the ritual efficacy of the nkisi and the presence of the firma are intimately related: firmas are necessary to activate the physical world into dialogue with the spirits, and neither nkisi nor prenda can function without the presence of such substances. Primary among these is white kaolin clay called *mpemba*, the name also given to the Kongo spirit world. Spiritual efficacy resides in this clay, and thus the presence of the color white is necessary to the invocation of spirits.[151] It should not surprise us, then, that Pereira's bolsas were also white, as they contained the necessary substances to communicate with the spirit world. Interestingly, even Sansi, in his insistence that the contents of bolsas de mandinga are not "African," is careful to

[151] Wyatt MacGaffey, "Complexity, Astonishment, and Power: The Visual Vocabulary of Kongo Minkisi." *Journal of Southern African Studies* 14:2 (1988): 190.

note that the power of the bolsas emerge, like the nkisi, at the intersection of the physical and spirit worlds. Though the contents are "not of an African origin," still, "the pouch contains the relics and traces of exceptional events in which the world of the living and the dead meet," through objects like the bones of the dead and the bullets that may have killed them.[152]

What else was contained in Pereira's bolsa de mandinga? Sulfur, gunpowder, flint, a bullet, the bone of a dead man's finger, and a silver vintém coin. While Harding has argued that the sulfur, gunpowder, and bullet "may serve as inoculations against serious harms from those elements," my argument here is much more specific, as each has a direct Kongo analogy, adapted for the context of a slavery society in Lisbon and Brazil.[153] In Palo ritual practice, for example, firmas are not drawn, but are written on the ground or on objects using one of three substances: white kaolin clay chalk, sulfur, or gunpowder.[154] Once drawn, the firmas are set on fire to activate the substances, with gunpowder being chosen for problems requiring immediate attention since it burns faster than sulfur. For this reason, gunpowder is preferred in the physical protection of people, while sulfur is preferred for its effectiveness over a long period of time.[155] In Pereira's bolsas de mandinga, both are necessary: physical protection, an immediate problem, necessitates using the gunpowder, while the sulfur ensures that the potency of the mandinga-nkisi does not diminish over time. Yet it is still necessary to light these substances, an act metaphorically performed by the presence of flint stone, which serves to "ignite" the gunpowder and sulfur, as well as "fire" the bullet, thus unleashing the protective power of the substances inside the mandinga at the same time as ensuring that the bullet is ready to protect its wearer. Lastly, Pereira was sure to place in the mandinga-nkisi the ancestral spirit called forth in the

[152] Sansi, "Sorcery and Fetishism in the Modern Atlantic," 25.
[153] Harding, *A Refuge in Thunder*, 31.
[154] Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign*, 74.
[155] Ibid, 129.

interactions between these substances. A fragment of a human bone, likely taken from a cemetery, remains a necessary item to include in Kongo minkisi as well as Palo prendas even today. Without the physical presence of ancestral spirits, the object would never achieve its desired effect.

Finally, Pereira also included a small silver vintém coin. About the size of a modern United States dime, such a coin carried a value of twenty reis in the reign of João V (1706-1750), during whose tenure Pereira was enslaved in Ouidah, taken to Brazil, and finally put on trial in Lisbon. Rachel Harding argues that the coin "might similarly evoke worth and effectiveness in the *mandinga*."[156] Yet an examination of a contemporary three vinténs coin (carrying the same design as on a single vintém) reveals some possible reasons why Pereira may have chosen to include it (Figure 3.12). As a silver, reflective circle, the coin already carries a clear visual analogy to the kalunga, the watery barrier minkisi must navigate to call forth the spirits of mpemba to the land of the living. But this visual analogy is even starker on the coin, whose reverse is occupied by a Portuguese cross made of two intersecting lines of equal length, calling forth to the dikenga and yowa symbols. Here, then, Pereira has not only repurposed Catholic iconography inside of Kongo worldview (again, a process that was already ongoing for central Africans who likely taught him to make the bolsa de mandinga). He also co-opts the physical markers of Atlantic capitalism: the coins used to pay those who sold him into slavery, the coins that cross the Atlantic ocean in exchange for the bodies of slaves, the coins produced to continue the cycles of economic and imperial expansion, here are repurposed as symbols not only of the spirit's crossing of the watery barrier between the living and the dead, but potentially of Pereira's own crossing of another watery barrier: the Atlantic Ocean, now marked with his own personal

[156] Harding, *A Refuge in Thunder*, 31.

history of enslavement and displacement. The choice of this coin, then, is made even more apt by what lies opposite its cross-cosmogram: the crest of the Portuguese empire, the same crest Pereira drew in red on the bolsa image, and the same crest on the ships of the empire that enslaved him and now has placed him on trial in Lisbon. Pereira's re-imagining of Portuguese coinage here is a stark political and religious move. Let us conceive of the Lisbon mint producing not coins, but pressing, over and over, the deeply-entrenched worldview of the very enslaved central Africans whose labor produced the silver to mint those same coins.

. . .

So far, I have argued for bolsas de mandinga's effectiveness as a ritual counter to the aesthetic conditions of slavery. The bolsa de mandinga's portability and construction as a pouch which hid its own contents facilitated its rapid dissemination through all levels of society in the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic world. This widespread use of bolsas de mandinga in Africa, Brazil, and Europe led to assertions that bolsas de mandinga existed as much more than anti-slavery devices or products of African resistance. Yet, the same aspects which spread bolsas de mandinga so quickly are also what made it so valuable as a ritual way of countering slavery's union of physical violence with hypervisibility. While on the surface the objects used in Pereira's bolsas de mandinga were Catholic, Pereira seized on the nebulous evolution of "Catholic" ritual and iconography in a wider African-Atlantic context to fashion an apotropaic object as a direct response to the political and aesthetic conditions of enslavement in the Portuguese Empire. At the same time, by using seemingly innocuous substances readily available in Lisbon, Pereira produced an object that could be at once Catholic and Kongo, allowing for the persistence of Kongo religious thought even through objects that seem otherwise.

Pereira's bolsas de mandinga, then, show how Africans in the Atlantic world dynamically

invented new symbols and incorporated new objects into ritual practices. This was for personal, communal, and political reasons. In Lisbon, Pereira would have had objects like Portuguese coins easily at his disposal. At the same time, the geographic origins of coins and the prayers of Saint Mark also gain their power from the role in reproducing the power structure of the society in which he lived. In this way, fighting slavery and violence in Lisbon necessitated utilizing the best tools at his disposal: a system of religious thought, adopted in Brazil, that allowed him to counteract and re-direct the powers in the objects representative of the empire that enslaved him.

Just as Pereira's traversing of the Atlantic exposed him to many overlapping and competing religious perspectives, so too did the bolsa de mandinga adapt itself to new contexts and incorporate that which allowed it to survive. Its portability, its dynamic incorporation of new elements, and the occlusion of its own contents made the bolsa an attractive ritual option for Africans across the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic world. In this way, the bolsa de mandinga is not an essentialized African cultural survival; rather, it is a practice that continued to be chosen, over and over, for its ritual effectiveness in new situations and cultural contexts. As such, the political and social pressures and necessities of ritual practice in a society based on slavery led to Africans carefully selecting and choosing those objects that not only functioned through the persistence of African cognitive orientations, but also dynamically responded to their current social conditions by incorporating and working through the objects that gave those social conditions power: bullets, weapons, and the Portuguese crown. The threat posed by the bolsa de mandinga, then, was its potential to incorporate powerful substances and invocations on the bodies of Africans rendered both invisible and hypervisible. But the bolsa de mandinga was neither: its ritual and political efficacy functioned across spiritual and physical realms, incorporating sacred imagery that "spoke" to spirits and ritual specialists, but remained

frequently impenetrable to Portuguese and Brazilian authorities. On the enslaved body, the bolsa de mandinga proved its effectiveness at fighting the aesthetic conditions of enslavement. And so, in 1835, the bolsa de mandinga, now known as the patuá, continued to function as an anti-slavery weapon for the participants of the Malê Rebellion.

Conclusion: Insignificant Things

The day following the Malê Rebellion, police arrested Lobão, a free Nagô man, on suspicion of participating in the rebellion. Similar to José, Torquato, and others brought before judges in the days following the revolt, Lobão was charged with possession of "objects which were suspected to be the same as those which were found on the blacks participating in the Insurrection."[157] These included:

> "His Patuás, or pouches of leather . . . [which] were opened by cutting them at the seams with a penknife, where were found various fragments of insignificant things, like a bit of powder wrapped in cotton, and others with tiny bits of garbage and little packages with seashells inside. Wrapped in one of the leather packages was a small paper written with Arabic letters."[158]

The palpable cognitive dissonance of these classifications: "tiny bits of garbage," and "insignificant things." The patuás worn by leaders and participants during the revolt, filled with carefully-selected sacred substances and holy writings, imbued these pouches with the power to protect their owners from bodily harm and ensure the success of the Malês' revolutionary aspirations on the night of January 24-25: in sum, the power to undermine the aesthetic

[157] The Trial of Lobão, as transcribed in "O Preto Lobão de Nação Nagô, 1835, Primeiro Distrito de São Pedro Velho." *Anais do Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia* 53 (1996): 111.
[158] Ibid, 112.

conditions of slavery, and to overthrow the slavery economy. And yet, in the presence of authorities who sought out these items with such fervor, the trial scribe notes that, finally confronted with the very "evidence" they sought, judges discarded – and disregarded – the activating internal contents of the pouches.

While Lobão's trial judge discounted the objects, writings, and substances contained inside his patuás, Salvador's district attorney and prosecutor, Angelo Muniz da Silva Ferraz, insisted on the revolutionary political implications of African aesthetics in Bahia. In a speech at the trial of Domingos, an enslaved Hausa man implicated in the revolt, Ferraz argued that the threat posed by the rebellion to the nascent Brazilian state was not only in the potentially violent overthrow of the province's slavery economy, but in the aesthetic opposition presented by Arabic script, Malê religious paraphernalia, and in turn, the physical and spiritual protection it afforded the revolt's participants:

> "[The prosecution] will prove so as to reach their goal, the authors of this insurrection worked in steadfast secrecy . . . [They] imbued their followers with the principles of the religion of their country, and the tools of reading and writing the Arabic language. At the same time [they distributed] written papers with characters in this language, special rings, vestments, and caps in their style, not only as a means to recognize each other, but as a shield whose impenetrability, prepared by God, assured them of their ability to overcome the obstacles that opposed their purposes without the risk of danger. [The prosecution] will prove with the help and guidance of free Africans, they traced in their hideouts the most horrible plans, which had they succeeded would have brought about the extinction of whites and *pardos*, the destruction of the Constitution and the Government, the

> loss of our properties and the burning of our public Edifices, the profaning of our images, the burning of our Temples, and all the monuments of our splendor and glory…"[159]

While in Lobão's trial his judge declared the contents of his patuás "insignificant things," Ferraz, even while emphasizing the apoptropaic efficacy of "writing" (as opposed to the substances and ritual practices that activated these writings), argued that these pieces of garbage held the ability to destroy Brazilian society. For Ferraz, Brazil articulated its history and imperial authority through a carefully-constructed system of signs and symbols. In turn, the power imbued in the patuás, and the fervor with which authorities sought them out, shows how tightly the Malê Rebellion bound aesthetic revolt with the overthrow of the Bahian slavocracy. Note Ferraz's concern, then, not only of the physical violence that would be wreaked against Brazilian citizens, but of the destruction of the *symbols* of imperial authority: monuments, images, temples, and public edifices; in sum, the visual culture of empire.

Yet Ferraz's stark opposition between the Brazilian state and Malê religious objects, especially Arabic written papers, demonstrates the precariousness of imperial visuality and the rebellious aesthetics that undermined it. Indeed, most of the more than thirty recorded slave revolts and conspiracies in Bahia during the first half of the nineteenth century were led by predominantly-Muslim Hausas, while most participants in the Malê Rebellion were Muslim, generally Nagô (Yorùbá).[160] Yet enslaved African Muslims in Brazil were afforded higher status

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[159] APEB, Insurreições de escravos, maço 2849, folhos 26-27. "A justiça de Domingos, haussá, escravo de João Pinto Coelho." As translated from a transcription in Reis, *Rebelião Escrava no Brasil*, 442-443.

[160] João José Reis, "Candomblé and Slave Resistance in Nineteenth-Century Bahia," in *Sorcery in the Black Atlantic*, ed. Parés and Sansi, 58-59; Reis and Mamigonian, "Nagô and Mina" in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, ed. Falola and Childs, 94-96. Reis and Mamigonian note that while many of the involved Nagôs were Muslims, the Nagô leaders of the revolt failed to enlist the help of many Hausas, who were the predominant Muslim ethnic group in the city. As such, a crossing of ethnic and religious affiliation bound the rebels together. Some of the Bahia revolts were led by practitioners of Yorùbá religion. While we have already seen the

than Africans from elsewhere on the continent's Atlantic coast. As Michael A. Gomez notes, the ability of African Muslims to read and write – in other words, their use of Arabic – resulted in the perceived higher intelligence of African Muslims than non-literate central and western Africans. As such, many Malês were assigned to "more prestigious or less backbreaking tasks that either used their existing skills or provided training in such skills . . . As culture-bearers and corporeal exemplars, African Muslims disproportionately endured relatively less inhumane treatment in slavery than did their non-Muslim coworkers."[161] As such, for Gomez, "the reasons for their frequent rebellions are therefore not necessarily self-evident."[162]

At the same time, Nicholas Mirzoeff suggests that the physical and aesthetic rebelliousness of enslaved Muslims may actually result from their higher social position, especially as tied to the literacy capacities they possessed. Michael Tadman uses the term "key slaves" to describe slaves held in higher social positions and who gained higher authority on plantations, especially as overseers. As such, it may be an appropriate term to describe the social position of African Muslims in nineteenth-century Bahia.[163] If the structures of colonial visuality and slave oversight contained the potential for rebellion from the inside then, as Mirzoeff argues, it is no surprise that such key slaves would be the leaders of most slave rebellions. Entrusted with

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permeability and adaptability of religious identities in nineteenth-century Bahia, Reis does suggest that some of these revolts were "possibly inspired by warrior [orishas], such as Ogun, the [orisha] of iron and war, who became increasingly popular in Yorubaland at the most intense phase of the Bahian slave trade from that region in the 1820s through the 1840s." This idea is supported by Manuel Barcia; see Barcia, *Soldiers of Allah and Ogun: West African Warfare in Bahia and Cuba, 1807-1844* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming). On the expansion of the cult of Ogun in Oyo, during what he calls the "Age of Ogun," see J. Lorand Matory, *Sex and the Empire that is No More: Gender and the Politics of Oyo Yoruba Religion* (New York: Berghahn Books, 1994), 13-22. On the expansion of the Ogun cult more generally, see Sandra T. Barnes and Paula Girshick Ben-Amos, "Ogun, the Empire Builder" (39-64), and J.D.Y. Peel, "A Comparative Analysis of Ogun in Precolonial Yorubaland" (263-289), in *Africa's Ogun: Old World and New*, ed. Sandra T. Barnes (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).

[161] Michael A. Gomez, *Black Crescent: The Experience and Legacy of Black Muslims in the Americas* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 84, 97.

[162] Ibid, 97.

[163] Michael Tadman, *Speculators and Slaves: Masters, Traders, and Slaves in the Old South* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), xxi-xxii.

positions of power and oversight in the context of the plantation, key slaves functioned as extensions (though not necessarily surrogates) of the overseer's authority.[164] As such, the frequent rebellions of key slaves would be in keeping with the larger structure of my argument: that colonial oversight, the aesthetic conditions of slavery, and the systematic visualization of power throughout slave societies could easily turn against itself.

If the structures of oversight had acknowledged the potential counter-aesthetics within them, when opening these rebellious patuás, they did not find what they expected. In the aftermath of the revolt, police arrested far more Hausas than were known to have participated. Hausas, the city's predominantly Muslim African ethnic group, made frequent (and perhaps greater) use of Arabic writing and patuás than Nagôs in general, and so they quickly garnered the suspicion of block inspectors.[165] Yet when judges opened their patuás, these seemingly literate Muslim slaves used "insignificant" pieces of "garbage." Yet these objects, these sacred substances, continued to be used in general by Africans, I argue, because they worked outside of the structures of colonial visuality, and in turn sought to flee the aesthetic conditions of slavery.

Thirty Malê patuá papers remain in storage at the Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia in Salvador. The incantations and writings on them cover both Qur'anic and non-Qur'anic texts, with the markings on these sacred pages ranging, as Gomez has summarized, "in degree of command from polished to novitiate, with the various grammatical errors an indication of both the nominal nature of the embrace of Islam by some and the overall difficulties of sustaining the Islamic sciences in a place such as Bahia."[166] One document, belonging to Francisco Lisboa, seems to indicate the "nominal nature" of Arabic writing suggested by Gomez (Figure 3.13).

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[164] Nicholas Mirzoeff, *The Right to Look: A Counterhistory of Visuality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 55-56.
[165] Reis and Mamigonian, "Nagô and Mina" in *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, 94-95.
[166] Gomez, *Black Crescent*, 107.

Rolf Reichert translates the text as follows:

> In the name of god compassionate merciful
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> (unintelligible)
>
> …Praise to god lord
>
> Of the worlds.[167]

Fourteen of these seventeen lines, then, are unintelligible by human beings; not sacred writing, but the visual evocation of sacred text, meant only for God. While Francisco Lisboa's page still visually alludes to lines of text, even if illegible, another document confiscated from an

[167] Rolf Reichert, *Os Documentos Árabes do Arquivo do Estado da Bahia*. Salvador: Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais, Universidade Federal da Bahia, 1979: Documento No. 30. Reichert's book lacks page numbers.

unrecorded Malê blends text and image in a graphic narrative (Figure 3.14). Rolf Reichert describes the image this way:

> Headed by a line with some poorly written and incoherent letters, a rectangular magical figure, divided, in star form, in nine fields: a circular, in the center, surrounded by two triangles and six irregular rectangles. The fields are filled with points, lines and incoherent scribblings. . . The figure, with its head text, is bordered by a stylized line so as to form four times the name of the Prophet: Muhammad. The author had little or no knowledge of written Arabic.[168]

While we can read the author's "incoherent scribblings," as Gomez suggests, as evidence of the difficulty of teaching written Arabic in Bahia, we can also argue that inside the patuá / bolsa de mandinga, writing does not need to be coherent as a textual narrative. The text here plays off of, and against, a set of magical signs and symbols that work to convey message intelligible only to the world of the spirits, only to God. While this seems to be at odds with typical Islamic insistence on the incorruptibility of the Qur'an, textual ephemerality and visual ambiguity as preconditions of ritual and political efficacy emerge potent aesthetic choices in bolsas de mandingas and patuás in the Atlantic world. Indeed, by tracing the historical evolution of the patuá through the bolsa de mandinga, I sought to show how ritual narratives and the ability of texts to speak was not simply the domain of Islamic Africans. Kongo graphic writing, articulated through the bolsa de mandingas of José Francisco Pereira, showed how Bakongo narrative structures, not just those of Muslims, forwarded symbols that could "speak." Yet this speech was always voiced in concert with the ritual substances that imbued these objects with power.

As James Sweet argues, written orations like Catholic prayers or Muslim writings would

[168] Ibid, Documento No. 28.

have seemed imbued with magical powers to Africans coming from non-literate societies: "For many illiterate people, the written word literally seemed to 'speak' to those doing the reading. African slaves, many of whom did not speak the languages of their captors, were astonished and amazed when they first encountered these papers and books that could 'talk.'"[169] In this way, Africans imbued these texts with powers similar to those bound to other objects in the bolsas.[170] Yet cast a different way, I am suggesting the efficacy of the bolsa de mandinga, as a counter to the aesthetic conditions of slavery, created a space in which texts, objects, and magical substances worked in concert to "outrun" the visual altogether.

As such, the patuá / bolsa de mandinga did not so much incorporate the seeming magical ability of texts to "speak," as they re-imagined and re-emphasized the speaking text as an anti-colonial aesthetic system with its own set of magical properties. Through the use of bolsas de mandinga in Portugal, Africa, and Brazil, we saw how these contents, through careful selection of internal contents placed in active association with each other, worked to guarantee bodily protection for the enslaved, to *fechar o corpo*. The Malês requested this same kind of protection during their revolt in Bahia, where patuás and their ritual contents protected Malês not only from the potential of physical violence, but also the violence of spirits, and the violence of the slavery system they sought to overthrow.

One can argue, on strong ground, that the Malê Rebellion was unsuccessful, and that the patuás failed to protect those who wore them. The leaders of the revolt were captured and publicly flogged, its participants put on trial and served further sentences and whippings, and Africans throughout the city were forced to send their cultural practices underground. Following

[169] Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 185.
[170] Ibid, 186.

the revolt, Salvador entered a period in which residents feared, and suppressed, "African" cultural expression and its perceived role in the rebellion. Through at least April of 1835, little diminished the zeal with which city officials took to searching Africans' homes and belongings. For the rebellion's detractors, African clothing, religious objects, and "Arabic" writing remained concretely linked to the possibility of further slave revolts. The discovery of such objects during police house searches resulted in the prosecution of the Africans who owned them, whether enslaved or free. Local residents often fanned the flames of the repression, turning in Africans they suspected, regardless of their participation in the revolt. As a result, Africans themselves grew fearful of the consequences of outwardly visible cultural expression. Many Africans ceased religious ceremonies altogether, lest their native languages and religious paraphernalia be mistaken as Malê. In turn, Malês eschewed the rings, garments, and patuás that were the public currency and indicators of Malê affiliation in Bahia. In sum: after the revolt, enslaved and free Africans lived in a far more repressive cultural climate than they did in the days before.[171]

[171] This African iconoclasm even impacted the constitutional rights of white slave owners. On March 28, even as the raids ordered by President Martins had been *de facto* police protocol since January 25, the Provincial Assembly of Bahia used the first act of their first session since the revolt to overturn Article 179, Paragraph 7 of the 1824 Brazilian constitution previously guaranteeing that Brazilian citizens had "in their homes an inviolable asylum." *Constituição Politica do Imperio do Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Na Typ. De Flancher, Impressor-Livreiro de Sua Magestade Imperial, 1824), 48. Instead, the Assembly authorized house raids "for the effect of conducting searches in all the houses with the end of preventing the insurrection and rebellion of the Africans, and imprisoning all the suspects." *Collecção das Leis e Resolucoes da Assembleia Legislativa da Bahia, 1835-1841*, Vol. 1 (Salvador: Typographia de Antonio O. de Franca Guerra, 1862), 2. As such, in the search for African objects and rebellious slaves, the Provincial Assembly overturned protections against unauthorized searches and seizures for *all* citizens, not just the enslaved. As such, one can make a larger argument here about the legal ambiguities of personal and collective property rendered visible by the revolt. If under the constitution the "citizens" of the empire possessed private sanctuary in their own homes, in practice enslaved Africans confounded the execution of this stipulation. As we saw in the trials of José and Torquato, raids could not be conducted in slaves' "own" homes, as enslaved Africans did not own the homes in which they lived. Instead, enslaved Africans in Salvador lived in the homes of their masters. As such, at least in the eyes of the provincial government, slaves' ownership of property inside their masters' homes created a legal loophole. The urgency of the Provincial Assembly's act, then, was not necessarily to grant further search warrants or legal precedent to the raids, but to try to sort out the legal-aesthetic matrix through which enslaved status was articulated in Brazil. In inhabiting the homes of citizens, the enslaved were still covered under Article 179, Paragraph 7, as the "property" of masters in their homes was inviolable. In this way, enslaved Africans did have a right to personal possessions and ownership in their homes, and these possessions – including the patuás found to be so central to the rebellion's religious and political efficacy – were protected under the constitution's guarantee of personal space, even if under the proxy of

Yet, as Ferraz's speech suggests, even through the articulation of a set of distinctly anti-colonial aesthetics, the Malê Rebellion effectively re-imagined, and undermined, the aesthetic conditions of slavery. As such, while in one sense patuás – indeed, all bolsas de mandinga produced and used by Africans subjected to the Portuguese Inquisition – failed to protect the bodies of those who put faith in their protective powers, the careful construction of these objects constructed a space for the articulation of African cultural practices in an anti-colonial future. In this way, writes João José Reis, during the revolt Bahians "saw revolutionary aesthetics in action."[172] Authorities' fierce repression of African cultural practice following the rebellion confirms the agency of these "revolutionary aesthetics" in the context of slave rebellion. As such, to overthrow Bahia's slavocracy was to overthrow the aesthetic-symbolic structures through which that system articulated its authority, and in this sense, the revolt succeeded.

This, then, is my insistence on the political potency of the "insignificant." These small objects, these incoherent texts, even when ripped from their pouches, could not be processed inside an interpretive system that saw the "opposition" of African-Arabic texts articulated, at the same time, as very similar to "civilized" European writings. Opening up these patuás, they found not any semblance of the powerful objects or images they expected – they found an aesthetic system which fled the visual altogether. Unnoticed and innocuous, impenetrable and thus confounding to regimes of surveillance, these substances emerged as salient ways to retreat from "the visual" as tied to aesthetic conditions of enslavement. In such an oppressive symbolic system, one where public visibility of the enslaved black body was defined through violence, the contents of bolsas de mandinga, emerge not only as inheritors of a black Atlantic aesthetics

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those by their masters. To legally search the homes of slaves, then, ironically necessitated taking away the legal rights of their masters, in many cases the very persons the Malês revolted against.

[172] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*, 200-201.

descended from African religious systems, but also as substances that survived, and were constantly re-purposed, as strategic methods of undermining colonial oversight.

Figures to Chapter Three

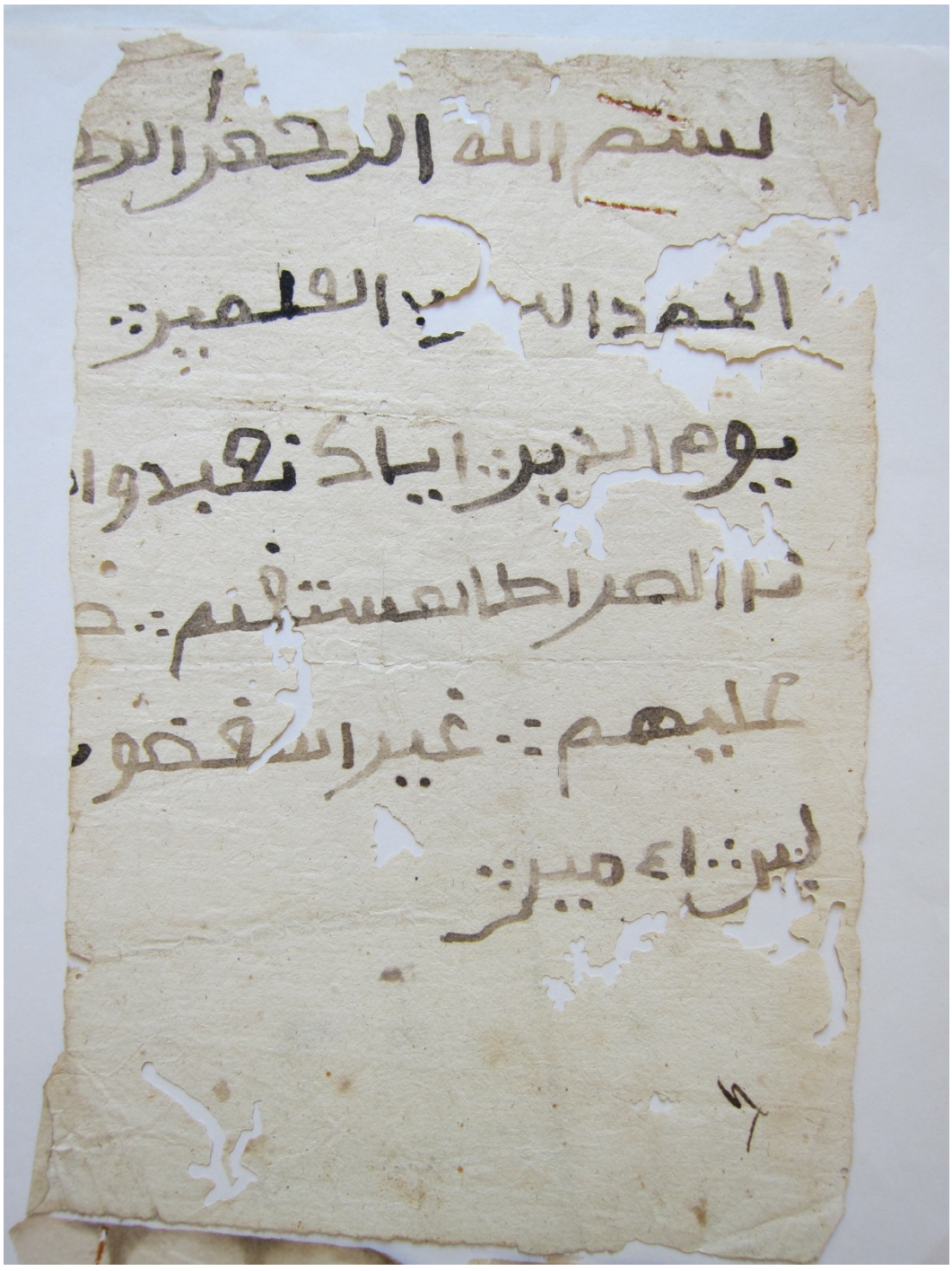

Figure 3.1
Document found inside of a patuá belonging to Torquato, an enslaved Nagô man. Seized by police on February 5, 1835. Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, Salvador.

Figure 3.2
John Michael Wright, *Portrait of Miss Butterworth of Belfield Hall*, 1660s. Oil on canvas. Touchstones Rochdale, Rochdale, England.

Figure 3.3
Rosana Paulino, *Parede de Memória*, 1994. Mixed media installation on cloth. Collection of the artist, São Paulo, Brazil.

Figure 3.4
Carlos Julião, Untitled plate 33 from *Figurinhos de Brancos e Negros dos Uzos do Rio de Janeiro e Serro do Frio*, after 1770. Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.

Figure 3.5
Carlos Julião, Untitled Plate 23 from *Figurinhos de Brancos e Negros dos Uzos do Rio de Janeiro e Serro do Frio*, after 1770. Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro.

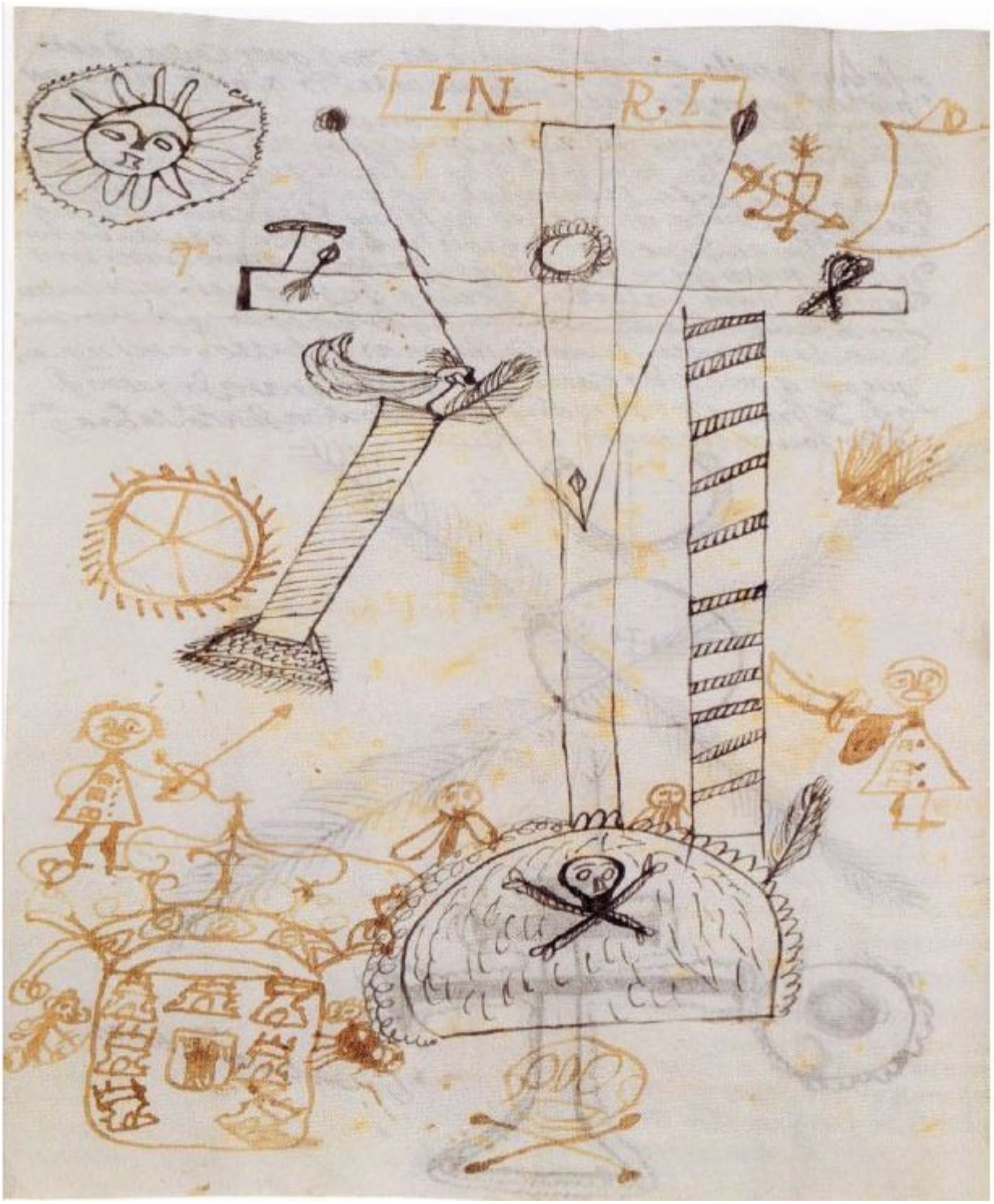

Figure 3.6
Paper found inside a bolsa de mandinga made by José Francisco Pereira, 1731. Arquivo Nacional Torre do Tombo, Lisbon; Inquisição de Lisboa, Processo 11774. Photograph by Vanicléia Silva Santos.

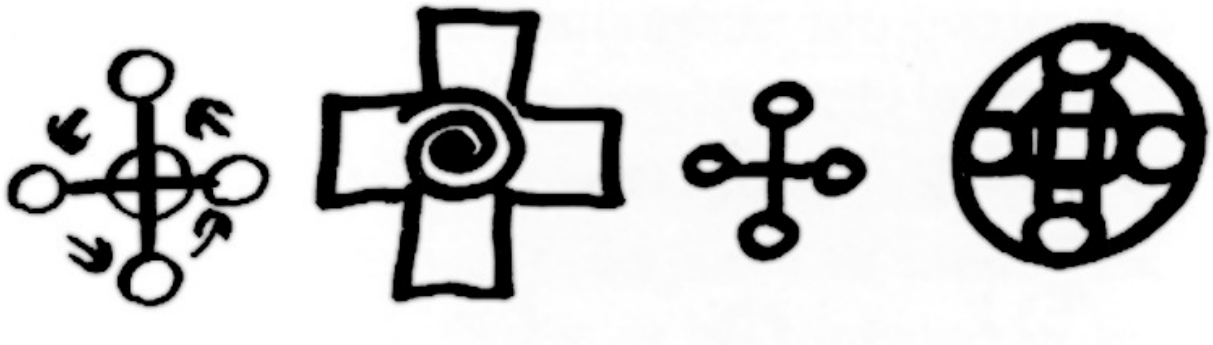

Figure 3.7
Four renderings of the *dikenga*, the symbol used to represent *tendwa kia nza-kongo*, the Kongo cosmogram. From Robert Farris Thompson, *The Four Moments of the Sun: Kongo Art in Two Worlds* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1981).

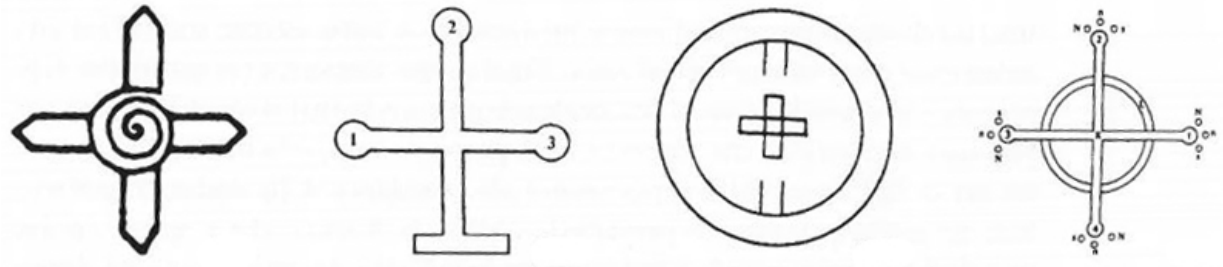

Figure 3.8
Examples of *dikenga* and *yowa* crosses. Figures 24-27 from Bárbaro Martínez Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013). Adapted by Martínez Ruiz from K.K. Bunseki Fu-Kiau, *Cosmogonie Congo* (Kinshasa: ONRD, 1969).

Figure 3.9
Crucifix, northwest Angola, 16th to 17th century. Brass. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of Ernst Anspach, 1999 (1999.295.7)

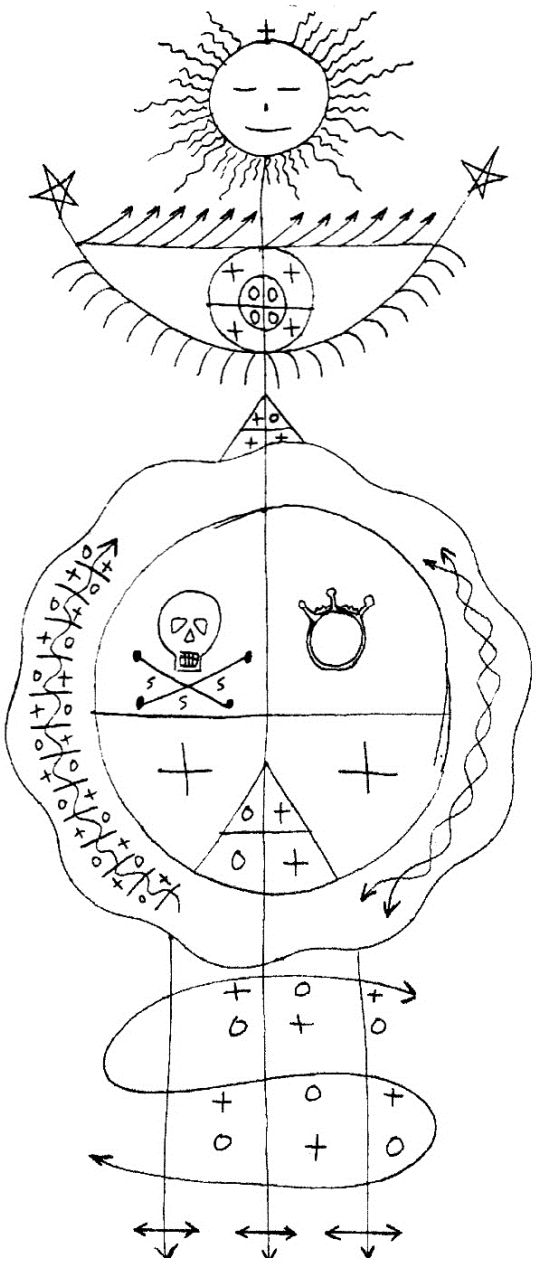

Figure 3.10
Firma called *El Contracto de la Caverna Secreta* ("Contract of the Secret Cavern"), made by Osvaldo Fresneda Bachiller, Havana, Cuba. From Bárbaro Martínez-Ruiz, personal collection, 1989. Reproduced as figure 91 in Bárbaro Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013).

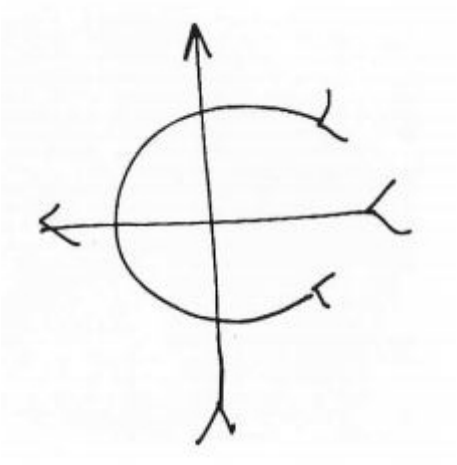

Figure 3.11
An *ndinda i sinsú* (class of signs used at the intersection of agricultural, hunting, and traveling purposes) marking the path one takes to find an animal killed by a hunter, Mbanza Kongo, Angola. From Bárbaro Martínez Ruiz, personal collection, 1986. Reproduced as figure 58 in Bárbaro Martínez-Ruiz, *Kongo Graphic Writing and Other Narratives of the Sign* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2013).

Figure 3.12
Portuguese silver 3 viténs coin, struck during the reign of João V (1706-1750).

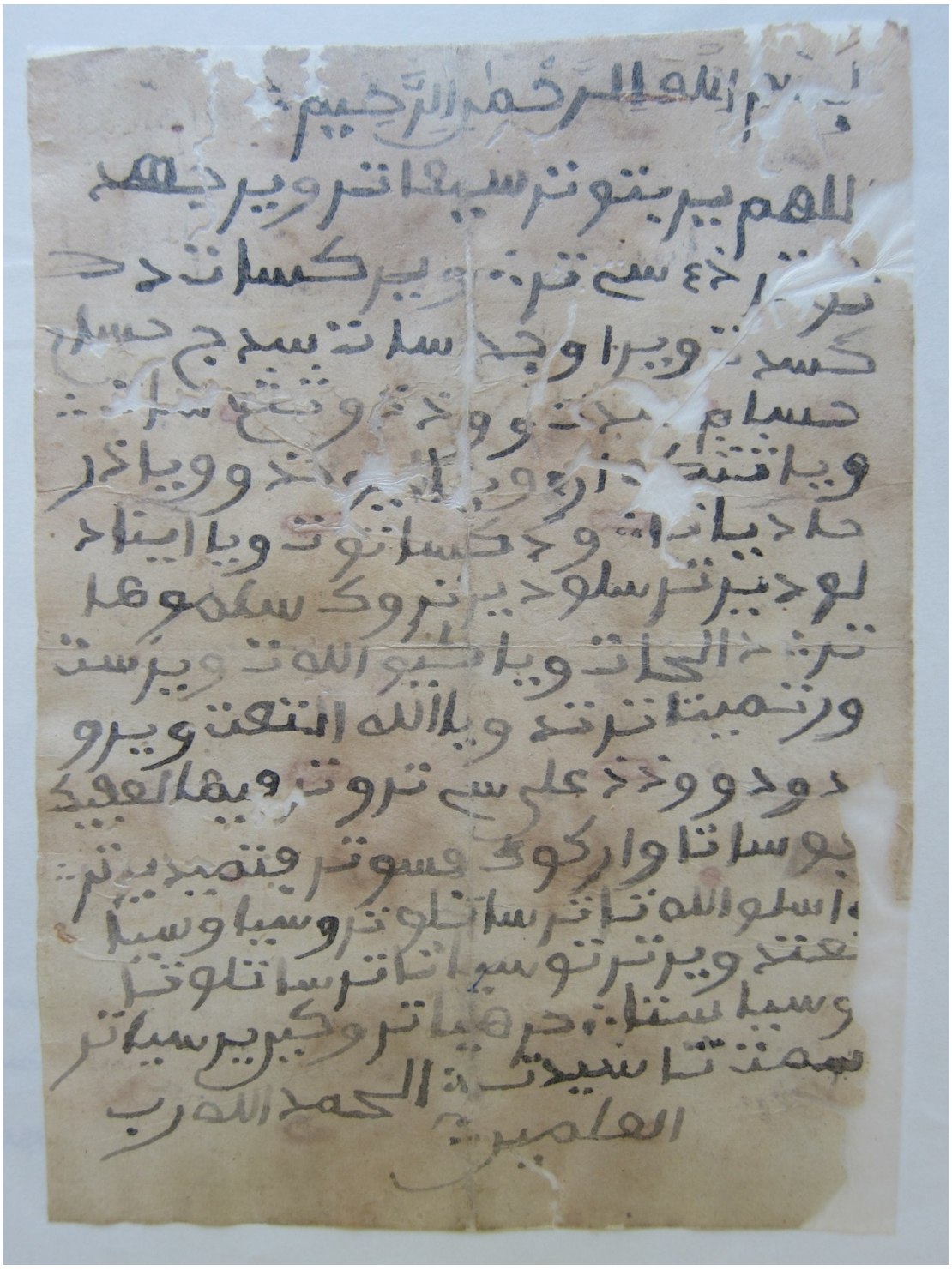

Figure 3.13
Document found inside of a patuá belonging to Francisco Lisboa, seized by police in 1835. Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, Salvador.

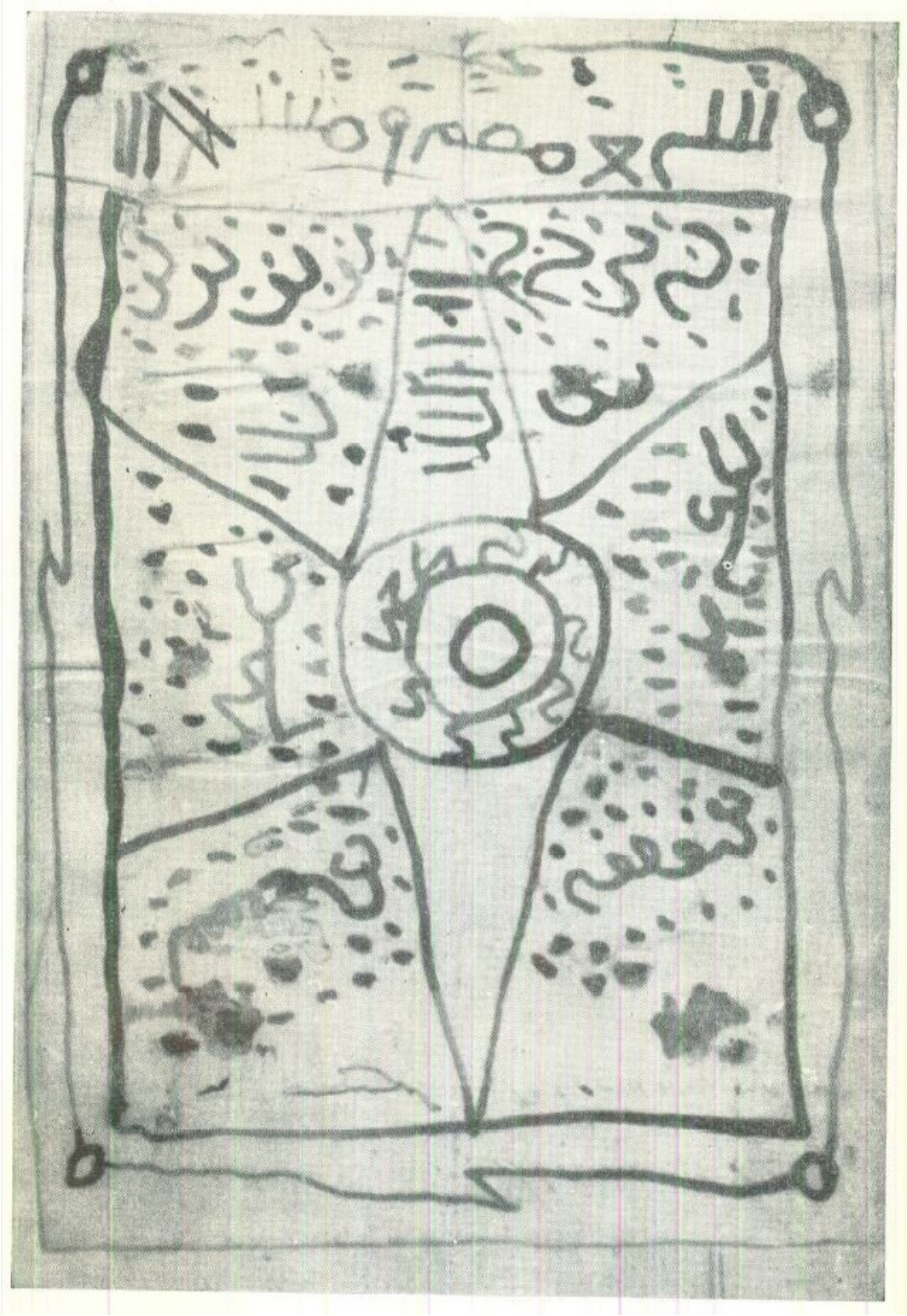

Figure 3.14
Document found inside of a patuá, owner not recorded, seized by police in 1835. Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, Salvador. As reproduced in Rolf Reichert, *Os Documentos Árabes do Arquivo do Estado da Bahia* (Salvador: Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais, Universidade Federal da Bahia, 1979), Documento No. 28.

Conclusion

How to Rehearse a Revolt

"How is thinking possible after Saint-Domingue?"[1]

– Louis Sala-Molins

It may seem strange, in a project committed to championing the innocuous and obfuscated as loci of anti-colonial aesthetic practice, to conclude with a vision as clearly revolting and reviling (at least to white landowners) as Manuel Lopez Lopez's *Desalines* (Figure 4.1). Born into slavery in Saint-Domingue in 1758, Jean-Jacques Dessalines emerged as one of the leaders of the slave insurrections now collectively known as the Haitian Revolution, crowning himself Emperor of Haiti on September 2, 1804.[2] In Dessalines' personage, then, coalesces the great white slavocratic fear: the slave has become the master – and vice versa – by violent force. Inserted into Lopez's biography of Dessalines printed in Mexico City in 1806, *Desalines* rehearses a set of tropes designed to explicitly, even violently, manifest this fear. Dressed to mimic the trappings of French colonists, Dessalines holds up both the weapon and the result of the revolution. In his left hand, the decapitated the head of a white woman, whose symmetrical face and white skin implicitly tie classical civilization to whiteness; an aesthetic ideal disrupted by the blood dripping from her neck. And in his right, Dessalines holds up a sword in a gesture of victory and attack, the blade clean and unsoiled from the violence of the revolution. While the sword's pristine condition asks whether Dessalines is personally responsible for the violence wreaked on the woman's body, her physical death is not necessarily separable from the loss of the vision of empire. She is now not only dead but also blind, her eyes

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[1] Louis Sala-Molins, *Dark Side of the Light: Slavery and the French Enlightenment*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006: 6, 7.

[2] David P. Geggus, "Preface," in *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*, ed. David P. Geggus. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2001: x.

closed, incapable of surveying the artful labor of slavery whose reproduction was also the reproduction of imperial power.

"The Haitian Revolution," writes Michel-Rolph Trouillot, "entered history with the peculiar characteristic of being unthinkable even as it happened." [3] As the revolt spread from northern Saint-Domingue across the colony, as plantations were razed and landowners were massacred, enslaved Africans created a world which, at least for whites, was inconceivable only months before. Such an event was so inapprehensible, Trouillot notes, as to be a "non-event." [4] The "non-event," then, encompasses both the benign and the apocalyptic: a representational black hole which sucked in and destroyed extant systems of colonial visuality; unable to be rendered even as it happened. How then, to paraphrase Trouillot, does one visualize an impossible vision?[5]

If Dessalines inaugurated an impossible world, *Desalines* provides a fearsome image which also rehearses and re-hashes existing visual structures of power: French colonial dress, the concentration of political power into a single emperor, and the occupation of the colonial landscape as the consolidation and confirmation of authority. The choice to include a woman's head as the vanquished here works toward this reading: as Neil Hertz has famously argued, in the 1790s, following the French Revolution, Medusa's head emerged as a symbol of the male ruling class' fear of losing its own political authority – either to women (with the snakes that stand in for her locks of hair alluding to castration, in Freud's sense), or to disenfranchised classes eager for territorial and political power.[6] In this way, the woman's long locks emerge as a way to process this fear: for at the same time, as Hertz suggests, imagining such a political threat in

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[3] Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (New York: Beacon Press, 1995), 73.
[4] Trouillot, "An Unthinkable History: The Haitian Revolution as a Non-Event," in *Silencing the Past*, 70-107.
[5] Ibid, 73: "How does one write a history of the impossible?"
[6] Sigmund Freud, "Fetishism," in *Sexuality and the Psychology of Love* (New York: Touchstone, 1997): 204-209.

terms of a woman's decapitation also serves as an apotropaic counter that seemingly re-confirmed the structures of white masculine political and cultural authority even as specific political revolutions succeeded in reducing that power.[7]

If Lopez sought to represent the impossible through the rehearsal of established tropes that both defiled and confirmed white masculine political authority, I suggest that "rehearsing" these tropes serves to highlight exactly what still remains obscured in such a clearly revolting vision. From the old French *rehercier*, "to go over again," "rehearse" derives from the term for a rake, used literally to turn over soil and ground. In turn, the visual similarity of such rakes to funerary candle holders gave rise to the term "hearse." In the rehearsal of the visual tropes of slave rebellion, the performativity of the visual derives from the cultivation of landscape and the spectacle (and specter) of death and the invisible. To "rehearse" the tropes of political authority, then, is to bring them forth in order to publicly, even spectacularly, put them to rest; to turn them over on the ground in order to cultivate what lies beneath; to imagine new worlds through the re-purposing of the old, and to revisit, as I have argued, the obscured.

Mere months after Jean-Jacques Dessalines' self-coronation, a local ombudsman in Rio de Janeiro discovered a group of free black militiamen wearing medallions displaying the portrait of the Haitian emperor.[8] For the ombudsman, the sight of black Brazilians (described as *cabras* and *crioulos* in his report) explicitly displaying support for the overthrow of a slavery regime in Saint-Domingue manifested that same possibility in Brazil's capital. Indeed, the militiamen in question "were employed as troops" assigned to "skillfully handle the artillery" for the city's defenses; and as such, possessed the ability to turn Rio's structures of protection

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[7] Neil Hertz, "Medusa's Head: Male Hysteria Under Political Pressure." *Representations* 4 (Fall 1983): 27-54.

[8] AHU, Brasil, Papeis avulsos, Caixa 2 (1799-1824), Doc. 295. The text of the ombudsman's order is transcribed in Luiz R.B. Mott, "A Revolução dos Negros do Haiti e do Brasil." *Mensário do Arquivo Nacional* 13:1 (January 1982): 5. See also Luiz R.B. Mott, "A Escravatura: A propósito de uma Representação a El-Rei sobre a escravatura no Brasil." *Revista do Instituto de Estudos Brasileiros* 14 (1973): 127-136.

against the very society they were meant to serve.[9] As a result, the ombudsman immediately ordered the portraits "removed from the chests" of the soldiers.[10]

The names and ranks of the militiamen do not appear in the ombudsman's report. Nor do records of any punishments they may have suffered. Instead, we are presented with a vision of potential revolt stamped out, a singular goal for the ombudsman to eliminate the revolutionary potential of Dessalines' image from Brazil. But what, exactly, caused the militiamen to so widely disseminate this image of the Haitian emperor, and what did the ombudsman so fear in its persistence from Haiti to Brazil? Owing to an absence of description in the report, we can only speculate as to what portrait of Dessalines was used in the medallions: whether it was a full-body image or a classical bust; whether it was painted as oil on metal, struck like a coin, or a carved like a cameo.[11] In turn, we do not know how Dessalines' portrait came to be so quickly known amongst blacks in Brazil, especially given the relative scarcity of known contacts between Haiti and Brazil following the revolution.[12] Yet the absence of details of the medallions' origins and medium serve to focus on the specter of Dessalines that looms so large in the report, even given its small physical size on the chest of the black militiamen.

The ombudsman's reaction to quickly eliminate Dessalines' image was, in a sense, very much in keeping with the fears of a slave rebellion domino effect that spread through the hemisphere's plantation economies following Haiti's 1804 independence from France. Throughout Brazil, the violent overthrow of Saint-Domingue's plantation economy created a cultural climate in which images and references to Haiti were not only feared in general, but

[9] AHU, Brasil, Papeis avulsos, Caixa 2 (1799-1824), Doc. 295.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Mott, "A Revolução dos Negros do Haiti e do Brasil." 5.
[12] Ibid.

particularly suspicious when associated with free and enslaved blacks.[13] This became even more pronounced following Brazil's independence in 1822, when government officials thought enslaved blacks would find the separation of Brazil's ties to Portugal as an opportunity to overthrow the new imperial government in Rio de Janeiro. In 1824 in Sergipe, for example, a man witnessed a group of revolutionaries paying homage to Haiti at a private dinner. Distressed by the events, he sent the following to the Governor of Arms of Sergipe on June 26:

> "ALERT. A small spark makes a great fire. The fire has already been lit. At a dinner in Laranjeiras . . . were made three toasts: first, to the extinction of the kingdom . . . second to [the destruction] of all that is white in Brazil . . . third to equality of blood and of rights. The brother of another boy spoke many compliments to the King of Haiti, and because he was not well understood, he spoke more clearly: Saint-Domingue, the great Saint-Domingue. . . Alert. Alert. Respond before it is too late."[14]

Around the same time of this small "fire," an anonymous official sent a secret letter to Emperor João VI, speaking to the fear the letter-writer had for the ramifications of the Haitian Revolution, and the counter-civilizational values of blacks in Brazil:

> "If one continues to speak of human rights, of equality, it will end by uttering the fatal word: freedom, a terrible word which has much more force in a country of slaves than in any other. So, the whole revolution will end up in Brazil with an uprising of slaves, breaking their shackles, burning the cities, the fields, and the plantations, massacring the whites, and making in this magnificent empire of

[13] For an overview of Brazilian responses to the Haitian Revolution, see Washington Santos Nascimento, "'São Domingos, o grande São Domingos': repercussões e representações da Revolução Haitiana no Brasil escravista (1791-1840)." *Dimensões* 21 (2008): 125-142.

[14] AN, IG 105, Ministério da Guerra, Sergipe, Correspondencia do Presidente da Provincia, fl. 119. As cited in Nascimento, "São Domingos, o grande São Domingos," 126.

> Brazil a deplorable replica of the shining colony of Saint-Domingue. Nothing is exaggerated as just outlined. Everything, unfortunately, is very much true." [15]

"The whole revolution will end up in Brazil," he fears. This revolution, he states, will bring a landscape of violence wreaked on bodies as much as the trappings of imperial authority, where the violent death of "the whites" is not separable from the burning of plantations and the symbols of imperial authority manifested in public architecture. As discussed at the conclusion of Chapter Three, just as in 1835 Ferraz would describe the success of the Malê Revolt as an overthrow of Brazilian imperial visuality, here, the letter-writer similarly paints "the revolution" as a complete destruction of the symbolic structures of Brazil's slavery system.

The specter of the Haitian Revolution continues to loom large in discussions of slave rebellion and African resistance to enslavement in the Americas. Indeed, the destruction of Saint-Domingue's colonial slavery system and the eventual establishment of an independent Haiti continue to provide a productive example to think through some of the key questions and paradoxes at the heart of ideas of humanity, rights, nation, memory, and diaspora. Yet I ask us to question the extent to which we continue to return to Haiti for inspiration, bolstered by its figuring as the only "successful" slave revolt in the Americas. "Too often," writes Robin D.G. Kelley, "our standards for evaluating social movements pivot around whether or not they 'succeeded' in realizing their visions rather than on the merits or power of the visions themselves . . . yet it is precisely those alternative visions and dreams that inspire new generations to continue to struggle for change."[16]

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[15] AHU, Brazil Diversos, Caixa 2 (1799-1824), Doc. 295. This letter is also reproduced in Mott, "A Revolução dos Negros do Haiti e do Brasil." *Mensário do Arquivo Nacional* 13:1 (January 1982): 6-7. See also Luiz R.B. Mott, "Um Documento Inédito para a História da Independência" in *1822: Dimensões*, ed. Carlos Guilherme Motta (São Paulo: Editora Perspectiva, 1972), 466-483.

[16] Robin D. G. Kelley, *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2002: ix.

Our continued focus on Haiti as a singular exemplar of a successful slave rebellion is in many ways deserved. But I wonder if such a focus comes at the expense of looking and thinking with the revolutionary imaginings of anti-colonial futures that were persistent and palpable foundations of so many other seemingly "unsuccessful" rebellions. Who decides, then, what constitutes a politically-successful revolt? Is it about the immediate recognition of a singular event that overturns the government or the state? Or would we be better served, perhaps, to think about how change emerges slowly from the struggle, from the daily, even ritualistic, performance of imagining other possible worlds?[17]

Let us return, then, to *Desalines* and its "rehearsal" of certain visual tropes which clearly represent both the destruction and persistence of extant structures of power. If the great white fear of the revolution was intelligible for whites only through pre-established and rehearsed systems of representation, then the revolting visions they encountered were revolting to them only because they were also, in a twisted sense, quite palatable. As studies on the visual culture of slave rebellion continue to emerge, then, I am asking that we remain uneasy about focusing on visions that may seem so clearly revolting. Lopez's *Desalines*, and the medallions seized by the ombudsman, are less counter-revolutionary visions derived from the new worlds imagined by the enslaved than they are rehearsals of the fears held deep in colonial authority: a revolution articulated through a seeming switch of places. *Desalines* continues as a plantation overseer, continues to display the trappings of French authority: the slaves as masters, and the masters as subjugated slaves, but the structures of power intact.

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[17] For a wonderful elaboration on these thoughts, see Marina Sitrin, "Measuring Success: Affective or Contentious Politics?" in *The Militant Research Handbook*. New York: New York University, 2013: 12-15. Retrieved from http://www.visualculturenow.org/the-militant-research-handbook/

Instead, I ask we rehearse the tropes of slave rebellion in order to find what lies yet untilled, yet not buried, yet not performed, under and around the clear and present. As I have argued throughout this project, the truly revolting visions were ones that escaped the systems of representation already directed in the reproduction of colonial power. My focus has been on the seemingly benign, unseen, and quotidian aesthetics practices in and around two seemingly unsuccessful revolts: the 1763 destruction of Buraco do Tatú and the 1835 Malê Rebellion. Through these case studies, I sought to highlight the revolutionary potential of alternative visions of a world constructed both in the face of a slavery society, and in anticipation of its destruction. While the immediate political aspirations of such revolts remained unrealized, the visions of other worlds they enacted worked to unmake, and unsettle, the key ambivalences of colonial visual culture. In this sense, "the whole revolution" had already ended up in Brazil.

In chapter one, we saw how, in the second half of the eighteenth century, the plantation had already been counter-colonized by its seeming opposite, the quilombo. As the apparently oppositional lines between these two structures blurred, the material presence of the plantation was, in some ways, forced to capitulate and adapt to the incorporation of potentially African forms of agriculture and world-making, manifesting "the plantation, *aquilombado*" in physical space. In chapter two, we saw how the urban architecture of colonial cities was, in a sense, a set of shackles used to impose a particularly violent brand of punishment spectacle on the enslaved black body; yet, following the Malê Rebellion, the "codes of looking" that structured this system were overthrown by the municipal government that previously utilized them. And finally, in chapter three, we saw how the bolsa de mandinga and the patuá confounded the aesthetic conditions of slavery as well as its legal articulation, allowing for a persistence of African

cognitive orientations through the Atlantic world, while forcing city officials to accept, even capitulate to, the power of bolsas de mandinga.

It is for this reason I chose to focus on those moments that remain unclear and obscure, because it is through these overlooked moments, at the edge of seemingly unsuccessful political revolts, that I argue we can work through the future anti-slavery visions emerging from enslaved Africans themselves. Such an argument, I contend, would not be possible without a continued focus on the agency of visual practice I outlined in the introduction. In this way, the vision the ombudsman should most fear is not, necessarily, the singular figure of Dessalines. In the absence of evidence, I prefer to imagine the lockets as containing an image of Dessalines not dissimilar from *Desalines*. If *Desalines*' revolt was through its palatability, perhaps utilizing the portrait of the emperor actually distracted the ombudsman from the truly revolting vision, one constructed not in the portrait but *through* the medallions.

In the last chapter, I took care to trace the agency of such protective amulets, as they moved across the Atlantic, accumulating histories and communicative value while confounding realms of visuality that structured enslavement. For the militiamen, those medallions were the material manifestation and key between Haiti and Brazil, the object that created and maintained their affiliation with a newly-independent black state. The political agency of the visual, I have argued, is then not necessarily separable from its seeming obscurity, and from the potential of the insignificant to continue to imagine other possible worlds. In confiscating the lockets, the ombudsman sought to remove potential inspiration for a revolt. But the medallions' ability to articulate a transnational black anti-slavery movement means the letter-writers needed not worry about "the revolution" arriving in Brazil from Haiti: even without Dessalines' image, it was already there, lying in wait, rehearsed out of sight.

Figures to Conclusion

Figure 4.1
"Desalines." Plate following page 72 in Manuel Lopez Lopez, *Vida de J.J. Dessalines, Gefe de los Negros de Santo Domingo; con notas muy circunstanciadas sobre el origen, caracter y atrocidades de los principales gefes de aquellos rebeldes desde el principio de la insurreccion en 1791* (Mexico City: En La Oficina de D. Mariano de Zúñiga y Ontiveros, 1806). John Carter Brown Library, Providence.

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  - São Tomé
- Conselho Ultramarino
  - Bahia, Papeis avulsos
  - Bahia-CA, Papeis avulsos
  - Brasil, Papeis avulsos
  - Minas Gerais, Papeis avulsos

Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon
- Inquisição de Lisboa
  - Cadernos do Promotor
  - Tribunal do Santo Ofício

Arquivo da Ordem Terceira do Carmo, Salvador
- Resoluções de 1745-1793

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