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AGAINST THE GRAIN? ALTERNATE GEOGRAPHIES AND THE 'COUNTERVOYAGE' IN THE TRAJECTORIES OF TERESA DE JESUS

CONTRA A CORRENTE? GEOGRAFIAS ALTERNATIVAS E A "CONTRAVIAGEM" NOS CAMINHOS DE TERESA DE JESUS

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Abstract: This article explores the life of Teresa de Jesus, who made the rare journey from Bahia to Lisbon as a slave. Later, she became the only freed Black woman to be executed in Lisbon. Refusing the gaze of the judges who interpreted her only through stereotypes, this essay reads her sentence 'against the grain' to develop a biography of this remarkable woman. Invoking the image of the "countervoyage," it articulates a rethinking of the entangled mobilities of enslaved and free(d) black women in the Portuguese empire, especially between Brazil and Portugal. As Teresa moved against the imagined current of enslaved black bodies by moving closer to the seat of imperial power, she challenged the racist, misogynistic and slavocratic ideologies that were fundamental in maintaining a stable empire. Thus, Teresa de Jesus contributed to a spatial and geographic re-mapping through various corporeal and ideological trajectories. Her biography highlights how a freed black woman sentenced to death could still lead her life with a certain agency, and illuminates how enslaved and free(d) black women could negotiate and resist the contours of spatialized imperial power.

Keywords: Black bodies; Gender; Slavery.

Resumo: Este artigo explora a vida de Teresa de Jesus, que fez a rara viagem da Bahia a Lisboa como escrava. Mais tarde, ela se tornou a única negra forra a ser condenada à morte em Lisboa. Recusando o olhar dos juízes que a interpretaram apenas por meio de estereótipos, este artigo utiliza a sua sentença para desenvolver uma biografia dessa mulher excepcional. Invocando a imagem da "contraviagem", destaca um complexo emaranhado de deslocamentos de negras escravas e libertas no império português, especialmente entre o Brasil e Portugal. Enquanto Teresa se movia contra a corrente imaginária de corpos negros escravizados, aproximando-se da sede do poder imperial, ela desafiava as ideologias raciais, misóginas e escravistas que eram fundamentais para manter um império estável. Assim, Teresa de Jesus contribuiu para um remapeamento espacial e geográfico por meio de várias trajetórias corporais e ideológicas. Sua biografia destaca como uma negra liberta condenada à morte ainda poderia seguir a sua vida com certa agência e ilumina como negras escravas e libertas podiam negociar e resistir no território do poder imperial.erent contexts, in addition to highlighting the challenges they faced when victims of tortures.

Palavras-chave: Corpos negros; Gênero; Escravidão.

Meeting Teresa de Jesus: a transepochal encounter

More than a decade ago, I was sifting through countless folders of crumbling manuscripts in the Public Archives of the State of Bahia, when I came across a large, extremely thin, hardback book entitled *Sentença proferida na Casa da Suplicaçaõ contra os Réos Manoel Joaquim, Teresa de Jesus, e Maria Joaquina, 1772.* Curious to see what sentence had been meted out to Manoel, Teresa, and Maria, I started reading. Five wafer-thin folios recounted an extraordinary tale of orchestrated murder, robbery, deceit, and seduction culminating in the apprehension and execution of the perpetrators:

On 16 September 1771 at around 8pm, a number of residents on Poço do Borratem road, Central Lisbon, heard loud cries coming from the house of their neighbour João da Fonseca. Rushing in to find out what had happened, they were stunned to see João lying dead in the middle of the room, his head almost cleanly sliced from his body as his throat had been slit. An open trunk was clearly in sight; João had been robbed of the valuables he had kept locked away. In the adjoining kitchen, his slave Maria Joaquina and a 13-year-old servant boy Jozé Sobral were tied to a post, their hands bound behind their backs. There was no trace of the perpetrator.

News of João da Fonseca's murder and robbery spread through the town like wildfire. Soon everyone had heard that Maria Joaquina was certain it was a priest who had committed the crimes. Padre Manuel de Souza Novais Trovão had recently arrived from Pará with his friend João da Fonseca, which likely explained why there were no signs of forced entry in the victim's home. The priest's public defamation led to an arrest and testimonies were taken from witnesses, who all swore that 'on the back of his right hand up to his knuckles, [he had] blood or bloody scratches'.[1] Nevertheless, Padre Trovão provided an alibi for the night of the murder and Maria and José taken in for questioning.

José's testimony led to the arrest and imprisonment of two black *libertos,* Manoel Joaquim and his 'concubine' Teresa de Jesus. Although we have no way of

[1] 'nas costas da mão direita, junto aos nós nos dedos, ou sangue, ou arranhaduras ensanguentadas.' Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, Seção Colonial, maço 572-1: Casa da Suplicação. Cópia da Sentença proferida em 9 de maio de 1772, f.4.

knowing the extent of its veracity, Manoel Joaquim made a confession under the strain of incessant interrogations in which he recounted the details of the crime as follows. Manoel alleged that having heard of the wealth stored in the home of João da Fonseca, Teresa hatched a plan to steal it. Begging the help of her lover to execute the murder and persuading João's slaves to become accomplices, she then got hold of the murder weapon, a sharp razor. While Manoel hid in the coalstore inside the house, Teresa and Maria prepared João's evening meal. As the latter sat down ready to eat, the two women came towards him to serve his dinner as Manoel hid himself behind them. The women grabbed hold of João, forcing him to remain seated and pulling his head back over the chair to expose his throat. Manoel threw himself forward and slit João's throat with the razor. Then Teresa emptied a chest full of precious metals, money, and linens, presumably allowing Manoel time to tie Maria and the servant boy to the column. They fled the house, leaving Maria and the servant boy to play their parts. Once it became obvious that there was nothing more to learn from interrogations, their sentence was pronounced by a panel of six presiding judges of the *Casa da Suplicação* (The Portuguese Supreme Court) and executed perfectly in line with punishments stated in the Philippine Code for murder motivated by robbery.

What makes this story so unique is Teresa's rather unenviable position as the only freed black woman in imperial Lisbon recorded to have been sentenced to death and executed.[2] This event left me wanting to understand what about Teresa and/or her alleged crime had led the state to execute her rather than commuting her sentence, which it was often more prone to do. I could find nothing to corroborate the details of the crime or the sentence, as the trial records and witness statements are missing. The disparity between the magnitude and symbolism of the execution and the archival silences around it seemed impossible to resolve. In more ways than one, I closed the book on Teresa de Jesus.

Twelve years later, of the countless women I encountered in Bahia's archival records, Teresa de Jesus is the one who has stayed with me. I have retold her story

[2] LOPES, M. A. Mulheres condenadas à morte em Portugal. De 1693 à abolição da pena última. *In:* BRAGA, I. D. e HERNÁNDEZ, M. T. (orgs.) **As mulheres perante os tribunais do Antigo Regime na Península Ibérica.** Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2015, p.122.

in vivid detail and with dramatic effect whenever asked about my research interests. Recently, however, I have become increasingly dissatisfied with the soap opera I have constructed of Teresa's life. After several aborted attempts at analysing Teresa's life through the prism of this richly detailed criminal sentence, I came to understand why my account of Teresa's life seemed a restrictive and ultimately fruitless endeavour. It became deeply problematic to tell Teresa's story through her alleged crime and sentence, this single instance that ended a life presumably filled with friendships, love, grief, migrations, and a quest for freedom from enslavement. In doing so, my perspective of Teresa replicated the violently oppressive structures of colonial and imperial power to which she was subject throughout her life. We see Teresa solely through the eyes of Supreme Court judges, thus taking a standpoint that reproduces the inordinate imbalance of power between enslaved and free(d) black women and white European male officials. Examining Teresa's life within this paradigm recycles the disparity in power between these historical agents in the present day. The silences of the archive have removed any trace of Teresa's humanity, memorializing her as a caricature of the black criminal concubine. Saidiya Hartman's beautifully articulated call to historians to confront the archive's violence and silence on black enslaved women, and to challenge our readings, interpretations, and methodologies of these figures by pushing back against the continual hypersexualisation of black women's bodies made me consider a different vantage point.[3] By refusing to tell Teresa's story on the judges' terms, I discovered another. Reading 'against the grain' revealed how Teresa's life also went against the grain in spatial and geographical terms. To recount this alternate story, I chronicle her life not as a story of crime and punishment, but as an entangled series of journeys across time and space.

While this story is singular in its eighteenth-century imperial context, the writing of a black enslaved or free(d) woman's story *as* History is becoming increasingly common today. Following in the footsteps of pioneers such as Maria Odila Leite da Silva Dias, more recent scholarship on colonial Brazil and the Luso-

[3] HARTMAN, S. Venus in Two Acts. **Small Axe***,* v. 12, n. 2, pp.1-14, 2008.

Atlantic world has placed traditionally marginalized groups and individuals at centre-stage in the historical narrative across almost all fields of inquiry.[4] Two key approaches to social history have been deeply influenced by this shift in focus: biography and microhistory. In general terms, we might consider biographies to be detailed accounts of a "great figure" whose singularity has contributed to History, while microhistories are often thought to be the inverse: 'however singular a person's life may be, the value of examining it lies in how it serves as an allegory for the culture as a whole.'[5]

Written twenty years ago with Anglo-American historiography in mind, Jill Lepore's words still ring true for much scholarship in Atlantic world history. However, the lines separating biography from microhistory in Luso-Brazilian historiography have blurred considerably. Indeed, the people about whom these histories are written straddle the boundaries between obscurity and notoriety, ordinariness and exceptionalism, a contradiction which in itself engenders a blurring of historiographical genres, which I term 'microhistorical biography'. Júnia Ferreira Furtado's intricately researched account of Chica da Silva perfectly exemplifies the microhistorical biography of an exceptional character, a celebrity whose story has been retold many times since her death and who has been mythologised.[6] Blending together the objectives of biography and microhistory has also been done by scholars who have explored the lives of less celebrated figures. The intensive use of Inquisition records has been fundamental for Brazilian historians in unearthing voices of the silenced, adding texture to our understanding of the social fabric through an interplay of agency, resistance, and conformity in the face of imperial power structures. We now know more about African healing and magical practices thanks to a microhistorical biography of Domingos Álvares, while recovering the story of Rosa Egipcíaca, a former prostitute who became a figure of devotion until denounced as a fraud, has offered

[4] DIAS, M. O. L. S., **Quotidiano e poder em São Paulo no século XIX: Ana Gertrudes de Jesus.** São Paulo: Ed. Brasiliense, 1984.
[5] LEPORE, J. Historians who love too much: Reflections on microhistory and biography. **The Journal of American History**, v.88, n.1, p.129-144, 2001.
[6] FURTADO, J. F. **Chica da Silva: a Brazilian slave of the eighteenth century**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

a different slant to the role of female devotional characters in imperial Catholicism beyond *marianismo*.[7] Most recently, the life and times of a freed black woman accused of bigamy named Páscoa Vieira has been painstakingly documented in a microhistorical biography that has been hugely influential in the field.[8]

This essay makes three important contributions and interventions. Firstly, in retelling the story of a former black female slave confronting a powerful legal arm of the Portuguese empire, it contributes to this collective effort to bring to light the individual lives of marginalized, enslaved historical characters. However, this essay enriches the microhistorical biographical framework by reading against the grain of a single criminal record, albeit not from the Inquisition, to pivot Teresa de Jesus's biography not on her crime but on her mobilities and entanglements. Thus, it presents a loose application of Hartman's 'critical fabulation' to Lusophone historiography and unapologetically introduces speculation and suppositions at various junctures to highlight the contours of enslaved and free(d) women's quotidian lives. It uses a methodology that takes a vantage point beyond the source, and from this different perspective employs an analytical lens of entangled mobilities. This enables us to understand how Teresa contributed to History (as biography) and what her life can tell us about wider imperial culture in eighteenth-century Portugal (as microhistory).

Secondly, this essay invokes the underexplored 'countervoyage' from Brazil to Portugal as a nascent analytical concept open to further development, which explores the entanglements between the metropole and colony. It considers how Teresa's inverted experience of the Middle Passage - sailing from slavery in Brazil towards "freedom" in Portugal – allows us a new perspective in exploring imperial entanglements and captive mobilities in Atlantic world slavery and gives a fresh take to the relationship between Brazil and Portugal. It enables a different reconstruction of enslaved and free(d) women's experiences under colonial and

[7] SWEET, J. H. **Domingos Álvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World***.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011; MOTT, L. **Rosa Egipcíaca, uma santa africana no Brasil colonial.** Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand Brasil, 1993.
[8] CASTELNAU-L'ESTOILE, C. D. **Páscoa Vieira diante da Inquisição: uma escrava entre Angola, Brasil, e Portugal no século XVII***,* tradução Ligia Fonseca Ferreira, Regina Salgado Campos. Rio de Janeiro: Bazar do Tempo, 2020.

metropolitan conditions from a vantage point that is scarcely documented in the historiography. From this standpoint, we can see how disparaging stereotypes of Brazil and (white) Brazilians were harnessed by black women, and in doing so they destabilized the racial and gender hierarchies that underpinned the entire imperial project, and question the harmony and tensions between metropolitan and colonial figures of authority.

Finally, this essay contributes to wider historiographical debates on the extent and nature of captive mobilities across the Atlantic world through the concept of 'entangled mobilities' and colonial geographies. In particular, it draws inspiration from Katherine McKitterick's ground-breaking interpretation of black women's geographic and diasporic understanding built on a methodological framework that incorporates elements of critical fabulation.[9] This essay examines Teresa de Jesus's story through her body. It rejects the reduction of black female bodies to sexual beings, instead envisioning the movement and passage of that body across temporal and geographical boundaries to reflect upon how violence, power, and control were exerted, inscribed, enacted, and even erased on Teresa. In exploring her body's trajectories, this essay unravels how gendered and racialized readings of that body were crystallized through consistent reaffirmations in society's pillars of power. As Teresa's mobilities across geographical spaces compounded her entanglement in the ideological spaces of empire, this essay argues that Teresa's biography is emblematic of a life 'against the grain.' Teresa's trajectories against the ideological grain reveal how black female bodies were integral to the daily functions of metropolitan life as well as in the colonies. Thus, Teresa de Jesus contributed to a spatial and geographical remapping of empire through her corporeal trajectories, as they ruptured racial, misogynistic, and slavocratic ideologies that maintained an imagined equilibrium of power.

Teresa's microhistorical biography is developed and explored in three parts. It opens with her life in Brazil and explores the significance of her 'countervoyage' from the colonies to Portugal. Then it moves into an examination of her

[9] MCKITTRICK, K. **Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle**. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.

experiences and movements across urban and rural Portuguese landscapes. In the third section, this biography considers how colonial and metropolitan agents in Lisbon were entangled in Teresa's orbit. By locating Teresa as the nexus of imperial entanglements and connections, we can reassess how power in imperial relations flowed through and across multiple axes (ideological, social, economic, criminal, and sexual). In conclusion, it homes in on the spatial and racial significance of Teresa's body within the empire. Examining Teresa's movements across the empire as a series of kinopolitical expulsions, it questions if Teresa's body is really 'out of place' in the metropole, or asked differently, how imperial Lisbon had entangled and inscribed itself onto Teresa's body.

A Life Less Ordinary: Teresa and her 'Countervoyage'

Teresa de Jesus was born into slavery in the early to mid-eighteenth century in Bahia, Brazil. We can extrapolate from her enslavement at birth that Teresa's mother herself was an enslaved woman, most probably hailing from the Costa da Mina (present-day Benin), from which the majority of Africans enslaved in Bahia were forcibly displaced.[10] The status of slavery was passed to the offspring through the mother and augmented the human property of the enslaved mother's owner. In this respect, it was her mother's enslavement that was the crucial factor that determined Teresa's own enslavement. It mattered not, in theory, whether her father was enslaved, freed, or free, whether he was African, mulatto, white or of indigenous descent – their status did not change the circumstances of her instant enslavement.[11] In her sentence, she is invoked as a 'preta,' a derogatory term meaning black. This indicates that Teresa's father was certainly of African descent too. We also know that she certainly had at least one female owner. Beyond this, nothing more of her parents and origins is known; I am yet to find even a baptismal record for her. Described as 'natura[l] da Bahia,' it seems likely she was born in Salvador, Brazil's capital until 1763, when capital city

[10] SWEET, J. H. **Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770.** Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003, pp. 16-18.
[11] NISHIDA, M. **Slavery and Identity: Ethnicity, Gender, and Race in Salvador, Brazil, 1808-1888.** Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2003, p. 53.

status was transferred to Rio de Janeiro. 'Bahia' was used interchangeably with 'Salvador' by Brazilians and Portuguese alike during the period.

A couple of other tantalizing clues point to her residence in Salvador. Firstly, at some point in the mid-eighteenth century, Teresa made the Atlantic voyage from Bahia to Lisbon, most likely with her mistress. The resources required by her mistress for this journey would have been more than most of the impoverished masses of Bahia would have been able to summon. Furthermore, Bahian slaveowners came from a variety of backgrounds with huge discrepancies in wealth, social standing, and numbers of slaves.[12] Teresa's mistress clearly had means enough to undertake an Atlantic voyage back to her home country and pay for Teresa's fare at least, if not also for any other slaves she owned. This points to a degree of financial accumulation that was most likely facilitated by an urban environment, where wealth was largely concentrated in the eighteenth century.

Secondly, the fact that Teresa was taken with her mistress to Portugal indicates a degree of reproductive labour on Teresa's part within the household rather than engaging in field labour. Domestic skills rather than sugar plantation labour were more easily transferable in a metropolitan setting, as sugar plantations had failed in Portugal several centuries earlier and had been entirely abandoned by the eighteenth century.[13] While domestic slaves were ubiquitous in the region, there was a much higher demand for them in the wealthier, urbanized areas of Bahia. Indeed, by the early nineteenth century, 'almost every free household owned or rented at least one slave woman as a domestic' in Salvador.[14] Thus, she likely toiled in domestic enslavement in or around Salvador.

Teresa was taken aboard a seafaring ship on a perilous journey across the Atlantic. We do not know how old she was, who she travelled with apart from her mistress, or even why the journey was made; at such a pivotal moment in the life of a black enslaved woman, the archive is once again silent. But this was not the Middle Passage, the horrific and terrifying voyage experienced by many millions of

[12] GRADEN, D. T. **From Slavery to Freedom in Brazil: Bahia, 1835-1900***.* Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006, xix.
[13] THOMAS, H. **The Slave Trade: The Story of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1440-1870**. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997, p. 70.
[14] NISHIDA, M. *Op. Cit*, p. 18.

Africans who were wrenched from freedom in West Africa and forcibly enslaved in the Americas. While growing literature on the Middle Passage has augmented our understanding of its role in the process of symbolically, ideologically, physically, and geographically enforcing and inscribing enslavement upon Africans, we know very little about the experiences and significance of enslaved Africans and their descendants on what I call the 'countervoyage.'[15] This 'reversed' transatlantic voyage disrupts our understandings of the Middle Passage in all its unfathomable terror, offering us a window into an underexplored route of captive (im)mobility across the Portuguese Atlantic world and complicates our understanding of enslaved spatial mobilities across the Atlantic. Through Teresa's life and from her vantage point, this 'coutervoyage' reveals numerous symbolic and ideological inversions of the traditional trajectory of the Middle Passage.

The countervoyage, as I conceptualize it, was not a diametric inversion of the Middle Passage, sailing from the Americas "home" to Africa, neatly dichotomizing and reversing a trajectory from (African) origin and (American) destination which anchored enslaved migrations along a single axis that ran across the southern hemisphere. Instead of mobilizing enslaved bodies across the southern Atlantic between Africa and Brazil, the countervoyage in the Portuguese empire traverses the Atlantic from the south into the northern hemisphere, sailing against the ideological current that restricted slave trade traffic to the New World.

In practice, of course, slave ships would call at multiple ports across the Atlantic world on their journeys. If ships departed from Bahia and were destined for Portugal, they most likely had arrived in Brazil from a West African port first, sometimes stopping shortly in Rio de Janeiro before docking in Salvador. These ships transported hundreds of enslaved Africans to Brazil and the majority, if not all, of the enslaved would have disembarked in colonial America.[16] The Bahia-Lisbon route may have included a stop in Pernambuco before proceeding to Lisbon, a journey that took between eight to ten weeks dependent on weather conditions. In the eighteenth century, this was a relatively short journey, and

[15] HARTMAN, S. *Op. Cit.*
[16] Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. Disponível em: https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/database. Acesso em: 20/11/2021.

arrivals from Bahia docked almost every month of the year.[17] Well-documented in the historiography, this 'homeward' leg of the Portuguese Atlantic voyage has never been considered an ostensibly slave-carrying route. In 1754, the *Nossa Senhora da Natividade* carried 386 slaves from Luanda in West Africa to Rio de Janeiro, where almost all of them disembarked. Only 16 slaves (4%) were taken to Lisbon.[18] Yet the presence of an enslaved black woman on the Bahia-Lisbon route runs counter to the traditionally west-facing forced displacement of enslaved Africans by travelling eastwards towards Europe rather than "returning" to Africa. Teresa's body on that ship is what creates the countervoyage; it transforms the Bahia-Lisbon route into a slaveholding voyage, symbolically reconfiguring the very essence and meaning of the journey.

The countervoyage disrupts the imagined single-axis model of slave traffic and reveals the corruption of a 'kinopolitical triangulation'.[19] Triangulation in this sense does not necessitate the existence of three different sets of migrations, but rather requires two or more co-dependant series of elastic expulsions to function. In the case of kinopolitical triangulation in the Portuguese Atlantic, the *imagined* logic of the system rested on three series of expulsions or outward migrations based on sixteenth-century maritime patterns, although in practice this triangular theory of seaborne trajectories broke down, as they were entangled with other Atlantic maritime trade, commodities, and routes that complicated this neatly conceptualized three-stage journey.[20] The imagined series began with Portuguese merchants and sailors setting sail for West Africa with certain non-human trade commodities that were exchanged or used to purchase enslaved Africans, who were violently forced to leave their homes. From West African ports, these Portuguese merchants would then take their human cargo to Brazil, where the enslaved were disembarked and sold, expelling them once again from the ship and

[17] RUSSELL-WOOD, A. J. R. Ports of Colonial Brazil. *In:* KNIGHT, F. W; LISS, P. K. (orgs.) **Atlantic Port Cities: Economy, Culture, and Society in the Atlantic World, 1650-1850.** Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991, pp 199-200.
[18] Voyage ID: 41239. Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. Disponível em: https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/database. Acesso em: 20/11/2021.
[19] NAIL, T. **The Figure of the Migrant.** Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015, pp. 112-113.
[20] See VERGER, P. **Fluxo e refluxo: Do tráfico de escravos entre o golfo do Benim e a Bahia de Todos os Santos**. 2nd edition. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2021, chapters 1-4.

into chattel slavery. Free from the presence of enslaved Africans, the ship was promptly loaded with exportable Brazilian commodities (and often contraband) to return to the metropolis. Each series in this imagined triangulation of imperial trade serves specific economic, political, and ideological functions without which the rest of the trade network would collapse.

By the late eighteenth century, however, this triangular trade increasingly gave way to a horizontal flow between Brazilian and West African ports, bolstering the belief that slave traffic was confined to the southern hemisphere.[21] This vision of Atlantic slave trade routes illuminates the deeply ingrained metropolitan expectation that enslaved traffic was initiated only in West Africa and terminated solely in the Americas. Despite the growing presence of black Africans and their descendants in Lisbon and throughout Portugal in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the ideological confinement of black bodies to the southern hemisphere formed a fundamental aspect of metropolitan understandings of the structure and ordering of empire, which will be explored more fully below.[22]

Enslaved overseas migrations are kinopolitical external expulsions, in that the physical relocation and movement of the enslaved body contributes to wider political goals enhancing the imperial project, and are in themselves political acts. Thus, an exploration of where that body travels, the vectors of its motion, and the purpose its mobility across various trajectories serves, can be crucial to complicating our understanding of captive mobilities in the Atlantic world and the myriad ways in which they contributed to a broader diasporic identity, as well as challenging prevailing notions of metropolitan identities. Ruminating on the figure of an unnamed free(d) mulatta concubine aboard the slave ship *La Galathée*, Lisa Zé Winters argues that the presence of a racialized, sexualized, formerly enslaved body travelling simultaneously against and with the tide of enslavement 'from one diasporic place to another produces a fissure, a space…[to] read and understand the intersections of race, sexuality, intimacies, geography and freedom in the

[21] THOMAS, H. *Op Cit.* pp. 153-4; 256-7.
[22] LAHON, D. Eles vão, eles vêm. Escravos e libertos negros entre Lisboa e o Grão-Pará e Maranhão (séc. XVII-XIX). **Revista Estudos Amazônicos**, v. 11, n. 1, pp. 72-73, 2011.

context of an African diaspora.'[23] Páscoa Vieira, an Angolan-born black woman living in Bahia at the turn of the eighteenth century, also made a similar journey as a freed woman arrested by the Inquisition. The presence of Teresa's black female enslaved body on a ship traversing the Atlantic reveals a slightly different voyage that exposes an unresolvable tension in the spatial logic of transatlantic slave traffic. This friction pivots on an inversion of the process of enslavement for Teresa, as she sailed from slavery into "freedom." She is "out of place" in a space designed not only to transport her, but also subjugate, terrorize, and violate her. A ship on the Atlantic Ocean is a space constructed physically and ideologically to hold an enslaved woman, thus necessitating her bodily existence, but as the geography of that space is mapped onto a vector that runs against the grain of slave traffic sailing towards eventual manumission in Portugal, Teresa is also invading this space. Her body challenges geopolitical authority as it is displaced from the Brazilian slave colonies edging closer, and even into, the empire's seat of power, upsetting an imperial and contemporary Portuguese reluctance to recognise the presence and importance of black enslaved and free(d) individuals in Portugal.[24]

Without more research on different trajectories of the countervoyage across the Portuguese empire, the contours and processes along the tightrope of enslavement along which enslaved women of African descent symbolically walked as they travelled across the Atlantic to/from origins outside of West Africa are difficult to reconstruct. A pioneer in the field, Didier Lahon, has recently pointed to the traffic between Brazil and Portugal, a transatlantic slave trade route that has been chronically under-researched especially for the eighteenth century, and argues that this direction of slave trade traffic partly contributed to the estimated 400,000 slaves transported in Portugal by 1761.[25]

Let us reflect a moment on this crucial date within the context of the countervoyage. Did she land before, during, or after 1761? The question is vital, as

[23] WINTERS, L. Z. **The Mulatta Concubine. Terror, Intimacy, Freedom, and Desire in the Black Transatlantic.** Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2016, p.2.
[24] LAHON, D., *Op. Cit.,* p. 72.
[25] *Ibidem,* p. 74.

Teresa's status, opportunities, and material circumstances hinged on it. On 19 September 1761, a decree abolishing the transportation of slaves to Portugal was promulgated. In theory, if not always in practice, this law meant that any enslaved individual placing foot on Portuguese soil was to instantly be declared free. Enslaved sailors or immigrants arriving in Portugal after this date knew of this law, and frequently fought with the authorities to receive formal recognition of their manumission. Their constant petitioning saw the law revised in 1776, stating unequivocally that those arriving only temporarily (i.e. sailors) were not to be freed.[26] Assuming that Teresa departed Bahia post-1761, her countervoyage begs a series of unanswerable questions: like many of these petitioners, did Teresa know she was sailing towards potential freedom? Had she waited anxiously for the ship to dock, so that she could rush out and receive her letter of manumission from the Customs House? Had she been forewarned that if customs officials denied her any manumission documents, she could call on a representative from one of Lisbon's many black brotherhoods who informally patrolled the docks to check for slave arrivals and ensure their access to freedom?[27] We will never know. But what can we know about Teresa's journey?

Between 1756 and 1763, Lahon finds that 998 slaves had been recorded by Customs as docking in Lisbon. 186 were from Brazil, and of these 61 came from Bahia. About a quarter of these were women. By the turn of the nineteenth century, dozens or hundreds of Brazilian slaves were arriving in Lisbon in increasing numbers, of whom the vast majority were adult men. His research indicates that children of both sexes and adult women were largely underrepresented on these voyages.[28] Regardless of whether Teresa made this crossing in childhood or adulthood, or whether she set foot in Lisbon as an enslaved or (theoretically) freed woman, Lahon's findings suggest that her presence *on* the countervoyage went against the grain. The countervoyage in itself was an exceptional moment in the life of a Brazilian-born slave, and taken together with the small percentages of women and children on board, Teresa's journey was indeed singular. We can

[26] SILVA, C. N. de; GRINBERG, K. Soil Free from Slaves: Slave Law in Late Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Portugal. **Slavery & Abolition**, v. 32, n. 3, p. 435, 2011.
[27] LAHON, D. *Op Cit.* p. 71.
[28] *Ibidem,* pp. 75, 80-82.

imagine the multiple disruptions Teresa's black enslaved female body must have caused in the docks, on board, and as she disembarked in the centre of imperial power.

It is through and on Teresa's black enslaved female body where we find the limits of the inverted Middle Passage. As the ship sailed in the opposite direction, there is nothing to suggest that enslaved experiences on board were the inverse of those of the Middle Passage. Trajectories may change, but social, racial, and sexual hierarchies could not be overhauled. Conspicuous in their general absence on board the countervoyage, enslaved black women would have tried to shield themselves as best they could from the rampant sexual and physical abuse visited upon them in the confines of the ship. The ubiquitous rapes, violence, and torture of enslaved women and men on the open seas has been heartbreakingly recovered by historians despite the silences surrounding, and embedded in, the sources.[29] In light of this rich historiography, we can sense Teresa's trepidation, anguish, terror, and pain as she made the slow journey across the Atlantic, whilst also acknowledging that travelling with her mistress may possibly have afforded her a small degree of protection from repeated sexual abuses. With no traces available as to Teresa's disembarkation in Lisbon, the archive has not only silenced Teresa as a historical agent, but also the very nature of this Atlantic crossing. These silences have erased the enormity of this emotional journey for enslaved Africans and their descendants, and have concealed another dimension of experiences of female enslavement in the Atlantic world. Is Teresa another 'Black Venus,' unremembered, unimportant, abandoned to obscurity?[30]

From the Colonies to the Kingdom: Teresa de Jesus in Portugal

If Teresa had arrived after 1761 (up to eleven years before her execution) and had known about the Free Soil decree, then it is not unreasonable to consider that Teresa may have expected a freer, fairer society with greater opportunities for black men and women. Ironically, there was no anti-slavery sentiment in either the

[29] HARTMAN, S. *Op. Cit.*
[30] *Ibidem*, p. 2.

1761 legislation or its enforcement. Most significantly, it did not liberate enslaved men and women already living in Portugal. The decree impeded the replenishment of the enslaved population through importation, and thus ensured a tight control on the numbers of black bodies in the metropole, but it was in no way designed to abolish slavery in Portugal or in its colonial possessions. This crucial distinction served to reinforce racial and imperial hierarchies, inverting the logic of racialized liberation. Enslaved black arrivals were manumitted to 'free' the kingdom of Portugal from slaves. By 1777, some 15,000 enslaved and free(d) blacks and mulattoes 'infested' Lisbon and their presence was considered harmful to the prosperity of the nation.[31]

In the aftermath of the 1755 earthquake that summarily destroyed most of Lisbon, the Marquis de Pombal, right hand to the Portuguese king Dom José I, focused his attentions on an empire-wide programme of socio-economic reforms in part to finance the rebuilding of the capital. Significant falls in global sugar prices coupled with ever-diminishing shipments of gold from the practically exhausted mines of Minas Gerais exacerbated immediate fiscal concerns. Whilst the fortunes of Brazil relied on hereditary racial slavery, Pombal came to consider slavery in Portugal as posing serious obstacles to fiscal rejuvenation. Imperial authorities believed slaves had become a drain on the kingdom, as they consumed increasingly scarce food reserves without making any financial contribution to the state through taxation. Furthermore, increasing imports of slaves over the eighteenth century had the unintended consequence of severely contracting demand for servants. Racialized assumptions of a propensity towards indolence, vagrancy, prostitution, and theft gave credence to these socioeconomic concerns, undergirding an already strictly stratified urban landscape that transposed all social ills onto the very visibly darker-skinned bodies of the poor and enslaved.[32]

Such attitudes were not confined to the capital. African shipments of enslaved men and women were mostly sent to the south of Portugal, but internal captive migrations crisscrossed the entire country. Black enslaved and free(d) bodies were

[31] SILVA, C. N de; GRINBERG, K. *Op. Cit.,* p. 432.
[32] *Ibidem*, p.433.

visible from the extreme north to Portugal's southernmost tip as they moved through Porto, Setúbal, Évora, and the Algarve. Their physical presence in the rural and urban interior as well as along the key coastal cities ultimately changed the socio-cultural and economic landscape. Despite being well-represented across the kingdom, the majority of black enslaved and freedpersons were concentrated in Lisbon.[33] Enslaved and free(d) Africans and their descendants laboured under diverse conditions, engaging in a huge variety of tasks that were the lifeblood of the kingdom. Teresa will have seen black and mulatto bodies in continuous motion, circulating through imperial public spaces as they cooked, made, and/or hawked a range of delicacies and textiles. On the riverbanks, she would have encountered dozens of black washerwomen, their knuckles raw from endless cycles of soaping, scrubbing, and wringing dirty laundry. Black boys and men were a constant presence in the docks of port cities, as they were essential skilled and semi-skilled maritime labour.[34]

Her own black body was engaged in similar work as it joined the current of black men and women. Teresa's mobility was largely enhanced by her job as a fruit seller. She could be seen carrying baskets of seasonal fruits on her hip or her head, selling her goods to the crowds that thronged the streets and docks. As both enslaved and free(d) women were involved in this type of work, it is possible that Teresa was engaged in fruit selling before her manumission as a wage-earning slave. Across the Portuguese empire, urban slaves frequently had a formal or informal arrangement with their owners, which enabled them to hire out their services in domestic or public spaces and receive financial remuneration for their labour. Usually there was a fixed weekly sum that slaves were required to hand over to their owners; any remaining profits were often held onto by the enslaved labourer as an incentive to accumulate funds for their eventual manumission or that of their loved ones.[35] Although it undoubtedly offered enslaved men and women a greater degree of agency, mobility, and social interaction than in agricultural labour, wage-earning slaves were expected to fund their own

[33] REGINALDO, L. "Africa em Portugal": devoções, irmandades, e escravidão no Reino de Portugal, século XVIII. **Revista de História**, São Paulo, v. 28, n. 1, 2009, p. 292.
[34] *Ibidem*, pp. 294-295.
[35] RUSSELL-WOOD, A. J. R. **Slavery and Freedom in Colonial Brazil.** Oxford: Oneworld, 2002, p.37

subsistence and accommodation from their earnings, on top of the remittance to their owner, often leaving little or no savings.[36]

They were also subject to violent attacks and sexual abuse from their employers, the local authorities, and even the public, enforcing their inferior status in the social hierarchy. The free(d) population were also frequent victims of similar instances of violence. In 1709, a group of black enslaved and freedwomen entered a petition to the King complaining of the violence and abuse they received at the hands of local authorities for selling corn, rice, and fish on the steps of the royal hospital in Lisbon's Rossio square. They recounted how they were forced to pay a fee of one *cruzado* a year to the Senate, and all remaining monies went to their owners in exchange for food and board, to maintain their own families, and help finance the black brotherhoods and manumissions.[37] Their plight demonstrates how for black female street vendors, the dimensions of abuse were physical, financial, psychological, and spatial. In circulating the streets as a fruit seller, Teresa's black female body was out of her (ex-) owner's reach, but its presence in public space also rendered it a public body. Her body's availability for common use and abuse would have reduced Teresa's self-ownership as a freed woman to a theoretical ideal estranged from her quotidian experiences.

While we know that she was living in Lisbon for some time before her execution, Teresa may have lived elsewhere in Portugal. Teresa's ex-owner's nephew, Caetano José Nunes Pombo, came from Benavente, a small agricultural town north of Lisbon and a short distance from the western banks of the River Tegus. Caetano's baptismal record elucidates how deeply rooted the Gomes and Nunes clans were in Benavente, which represented his paternal and maternal relatives respectively.[38] Both branches of his family were well-settled and well-known in the area, with various degrees of intermarriage with the local elite on both sides. Had Teresa remained enslaved upon her arrival in Portugal, it is

[36] *Ibidem*, p.38.
[37] *Ibidem*, p. 295.
[38] Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo. Paróquia de Benavente: Registo de Batismos (1728-1758), fólio 165. PT-TT-PRQ-PBNV01-001-00004.

possible that she accompanied her owner, Caetano's unnamed aunt, to Benavente before later moving to Lisbon.

Three fragments of documentary evidence suggest that this may have been the case. In her Sentence, Teresa is described as having stolen the victim's possessions and fled. One of the key concerns for the judges was locating the stolen goods, which included 'a lot of gold and silver coins, and some clothing' (Sentença, f. 3). Repeated interrogations unearthed three different tales of the money's whereabouts. Teresa stated in one testimony that Manoel, her alleged lover and denouncer, had given money to a man named José Pacheco, who also lived in Benavente. She insisted that the money in question had not been stolen from João da Fonseca, but had been left to Manoel by his previous owner. What happened to the stolen money remains a mystery. But the crucial point here in Teresa's biography is the suggestion of a deeper connection and entanglement with the town of Benavente and Manoel himself. How did Manoel know José? Had they met through Teresa, or had Manoel lived in or near Benavente?

Secondly, Teresa suggests that even after her manumission, she had made contact with Caetano. Their connection was close enough that Caetano insisted that Teresa felt a hatred towards not only, but also his wife Anna Josefina, indicating that they were more than passing acquaintances. In her first interrogation, Teresa claimed that she had given the money to Caetano as a loan, but could not remember the exact figure lent to him. With no written or physical proof of this loan, the judges promptly dismissed her allegations. Yet she claimed that her loan was to finance a melon farm for Caetano to cultivate. This is highly suggestive of a prior knowledge of Caetano's agricultural background, as he was the owner of a vineyard and cultivator of seasonal fruits. He refutes her claims on the grounds that her requests for developing a melon farm in September were absurd, considering that this was entirely the wrong season to embark on such a venture, and besides, his fortunes and financial circumstances had not improved in the least (Sentença, f.6). The fact remains, however, that Caetano cultivated fruits and Teresa sold fruit in the streets of Lisbon. Is it possible that the fruit she sold came from his farms and vineyards?

Finally, a tantalizing coincidence also points to this possibility. On 6 August 1741, one João da Fonseca married Domingas Maria Caetana in Benavente's principal church.[39] Perhaps João had lived there too, before moving to Poço do Borratem in the capital. Was Benavente where Teresa first encountered João da Fonseca, the victim of an horrific murder-robbery whom she was alleged to have killed? Without more evidence to confirm any of these circumstances, they remain of course solely within the realm of speculation. But such speculation itself reveals the multiple possibilities and trajectories that Teresa's life and body could have taken as she travelled through the empire. Enslavement and emancipation in this context were not consistent with a simple confinement or immobilization of the enslaved or free(d) body within spatial or geographical locations. Exploring the possibilities of Teresa's movements in itself is an exercise that highlights the degree of captive and free(d) mobilities that ran counter to the slavocratic logic of black corporal confinement located spatially in places requiring intensive and backbreaking productive labour, and geographically restricted to the overseas colonies.

Teresa was a 'preta forra,' a freed black woman. If she remained enslaved upon her arrival, Teresa may have had to cultivate and rely on networks of friendships and kin to assist her quest for manumission, helping her accumulate the finances necessary for self-purchase (essentially paying her owner Teresa's financial worth) as well as guiding her through the legal processes. Slaveowners were under no legal obligation to set a price for self-purchase; rather, the tradition of negotiating terms of paid manumission was customary with slaves often having to initiate the process.[40] There is another possibility: Teresa's owner may have released her from slavery without any financial compensation. Although only granted under exceptional circumstances, and therefore relatively rare, it formed an important component in the relations between the enslaved and their masters, as the promise of eventual freedom upon the death of their owner was often used

[39] Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo. Paróquia de Benavente: Livro de Casamentos (1716-1750), fólio 171. PT-TT-PRQ-PBNV01-002-00001.
[40] NISHIDA, M. *Op. Cit,* p. 75.

as an incentive for eliciting compliance among the enslaved.[41] It is possible that Teresa's owner had bestowed testamentary manumission upon Teresa after the former's death, particularly as this was a practice that heavily benefitted slaves born in the colonies and conversely largely disadvantaged African slaves.[42] Nevertheless, given Caetano's testimony, unpaid manumission seems unlikely. He alleges that Teresa's claims of his peripheral involvement in the crimes for which she was sentenced were motivated by a 'transparent hatred that she had for him and his wife…as she had been a slave of one of his aunts' (Sentença, f.6).[43] Although Caetano's allegations and defence strategy are deeply suspect and driven by self-interest, it is credible that his claims might not have had the same effect had Teresa made clear his aunt had granted her unpaid manumission.

Whatever the terms of her freedom from slavery, Teresa's free status reflects some empire-wide manumission patterns. Research in the field indicates that women were more likely to achieve manumission than men, while Brazilian-born ex-slaves represented a large majority of the freed population. Yet lighter-skinned slaves, especially those of mixed heritage, had a distinct advantage in their quest for manumission, demonstrating that Teresa's manumission went against the grain in terms of her skin colour.[44] Although Teresa was a dark-skinned woman, her gender and her birthplace were factors that may have facilitated the arduous, and so often unsuccessful, path to manumission.

Imperial Entanglements: Teresa de Jesus in Lisbon

At some point after her arrival, she was arrested for an unspecified crime and imprisoned in a jail on the alley Beco das Olarias. Our inability to state with any conviction whether this event occurred before or after her manumission demonstrates another dimension to how legislative and judicial practices shaped experiences of slavery and freedom, inscribing the mechanisms of power onto the bodies of enslaved and free(d) people of colour through a series of

[41] CASTELNAU-L'ESTOILE, C. D., *Op. Cit.,* p. 138.
[42] NISHIDA, M. *Op. Cit*. p. 11.
[43] 'refinado ódio, que lhe tinha, e a sua mulher…por ter sido escrava de uma sua Tia'
[44] KLEIN, H., LUNA, F. V. **Slavery in Brazil.** Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010, pp. 255-271.

(im)mobilizations. Officials of the state, including the Inquisition, consistently imprisoned, exiled, or executed slaves for crimes they had (allegedly) committed in the metropole and the wider Portuguese colonies.[45] Throughout the imperial world, the incarceration of slaves engendered significant tensions between slaveowners and the authorities, as the former frequently complained of their obligations to defray the cost of their slave's imprisonment, which was further compounded by the lack of recompense in the face of the forced removal of their property. While slaveowners sometimes managed to have their slaves released early or charges against them dropped through a series of legal proceedings or petitions, oftentimes their grievances went unanswered and slaves were summarily tried and sentenced. Embroiled in the power struggles between slaveowners and crown officials, slaves would have felt the multiplying effect of state power exert and inscribe itself onto their bodies, be it through the sequences of (im)mobilizations throughout the criminal process or through the symbolic assertions of multiple ownership over their bodies, with not only their masters, but also the state laying claim to the right to (im)mobilize them at will. Located only 500 metres away from the scene of her alleged crime and death, it becomes clear that her imprisonment in Olarias jail was a juncture at which Teresa entangled herself further with the agents and subjects of imperial rule until her gruesome execution.

Unlike the Crown Prison "Limoeira," in which Teresa and all of the other accused parties outlined in the Sentence were held, Olarias was one of the smaller jails in Lisbon. Conditions would have been extremely poor; hygiene standards were deplorable and disease was rife across all jails. Lisbon's Holy House of Mercy, the powerful charitable arm of the Catholic Church, regularly sent food to prisoners, often serving as a lifeline to those on the brink of starvation. In the 1700s in Portugal, incarceration was not a punishment or sentence in itself; this was a development that slowly emerged over the following century. Instead, jails were maintained to hold prisoners *until* sentencing was completed, and typical

[45] For an example of the Inquisition imprisoning and exiling slaves, see CASTELNAU-L'ESTOILE, C. D., *Op Cit*, pp.194-206. For the sentencing and execution of slaves for civil crimes in Lisbon, see LOPES, M. A. *Op Cit,* pp. 134-136. For the incarceration, sentencing, and hanging of slaves in Bahia, see NISHIDA, M. *Op. Cit*, pp. 34, 66, 103-4.

punishments included monetary fines and/or exile. The high costs of prison management and inmate maintenance warranted this as a somewhat expedient solution, as it simultaneously freed the state from the financial burden of prolonged incarceration, recouped defrayed costs, and expelled 'undesirable' elements to other parts of the empire that urgently required convict labour or settlement.[46]

Around the same time that Teresa was being held in the Olarias jail, a black man named Manoel Joaquim was also imprisoned there. Described as a 'preto forro' in the Sentence (f.3), we do not know if Manoel was of enslaved or freed status during his period of incarceration either. Nonetheless, Manoel and Teresa may well have mutually recognised what they had in common. Both were considered to be black, had undoubtedly suffered violence and coercion in their enslavement, and both were Brazilian-born, possibly in Salvador. Did one of them hear a Brazilian lilt in the words of an unseen fellow inmate? Did their shared heritage have deeper roots, stretching back towards a common ancestral 'nation' in Africa, or did their forebears hail from different ethnic groups found all along the coastal and interior territories of West Africa? Together, were they able to recreate ties with their homelands, Brazil and Africa?[47] Did they share any mutual acquaintances in the relatively small and highly conspicuous community of black Brazilians living in Lisbon? The list of unanswerable questions goes on.

Yet this encounter, based on the reciprocal acknowledgment of two Brazilian-born enslaved or freed black people physically, spatially, and figuratively confined within a geographical and architectural structure by an imperial judicial system designed to exude the power and violence that sat at its core, is more than a historical moment, exemplary of innumerable narratives recounting contacts between black Brazilians and white Europeans in asymmetric paradigms of power. The moment of this contact is not stable, nor is it a discrete meeting of ideas, cultures, and bodies that stands alone, one of many millions of individual instances that collectively underscore the dynamics of empire. The symbolic crossroads on

[46] COATES, T. J. **Convict Labor in the Portuguese Empire: 1740-1932. Redefining the Empire with Forced Labor and New Imperialism.** Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2013, pp. 16-17.
[47] SWEET, Recreating Africa. *Op Cit.*, pp. 33-40.

which Olarias prison stood for both Manoel and Teresa lay at the heart of a web of social, economic, political, religious, and judicial interdependencies, so inextricably entangled that their very existence relies on that of all the others. Thinking about Teresa's life and body in Lisbon through the lens of 'entanglement' is extremely fruitful in this regard, as it unveils the uneven nature of interdependencies on local, colonial, and imperial levels, which we can imagine as knot-like structures woven together across multiple axes of cultural and ideological motion.[48]

Manoel and Teresa's budding relationship was interpreted as 'concubinage,' or a temporary and informal sexual relationship that was not sanctioned as Tridentate marriage by the Catholic Church. Concubinage was ubiquitous in the Portuguese empire and concubines came from all racial, social, and status backgrounds, although it was heavily associated with enslaved and free(d) women of colour living in poverty.[49] Much of the scholarship in this field has focused on colonial Brazil. However, Ana Silvia Volpi Scott has argued that not only was concubinage a widespread practice in Portugal, but also that over the 1750s and 1760s, denunciations of concubinage were at their peak. Scott suggests that this was a period of intense ecclesiastical pressure and persecution of immoral sexual conduct, which exposed the degree to which concubinage was practiced in the region.[50] Despite the fact that many white Portuguese women were denounced as 'concubines,' racial stereotypes of black feminine hypersexuality, immorality, and physical availability based on their corporeal circulations of public spaces deepened ideological and social expectations of enslaved and free(d) black women to be living in relationships of concubinage. Thus, Teresa's status as a concubine held much greater significance that simply indicating her engagement in a non-marital sexual relationship. Teresa embodied 'the concubine' both physically and ideologically, as a black woman of enslaved origins, whose sexual and moral failings were characteristic of her race, and inscribed on her body as she wandered through the streets with her baskets of fruit.

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[48] BALLANTYNE, T. **Entanglements of Empire: Missionaries, Maori, and the Question of the Body.** Durham: Duke University Press, 2014.
[49] DIAS, M. O. L. S., *Op. Cit.,* pp.126-129.
[50] SCOTT, A. S. V. O Avesso e o Direito: concubinato e casamento numa comunidade do noroeste português. **Paidéia**, Ribeirão Preto, v. 12, n. 22, p. 50, 2002.

Negative assumptions and connotations of relationships of concubinage do not necessarily indicate that women's lives were severely restricted, shameful or dishonourable. Indeed, families were often founded in concubinage, and kin and community groups would assist concubines in times of need. There were also clear connections between concubinage and opportunities for spatial mobility in late eighteenth-century colonial Brazil, and similar patterns of movement can be found in the metropolis.[51] Manoel and Teresa's relationship would have offered both parties mutual support and access to resources, the possibility to recreate ties with their homeland, and increased mobility and connections in Lisbon and perhaps Benavente. Their concubinage strengthened their ties to Brazil and Africa, but also to Portugal. Furthermore, their close contact with the servant boy José Sobral and Maria Joaquina, the enslaved woman who was executed alongside the couple for having murdered her master, tightened their entanglement in the empire as they drew the three continents ever closer. Yet the increasing presence of enslaved and free(d) black people and their sexual, friendly, and spiritual relationships of intimacy further fuelled racialized concerns in the metropolis.

Enslaved and free(d) Brazilians in Portugal played an important role in the perpetuation of these anxieties through their diasporic activities. In the docks of Lisbon, two enslaved men arriving from West Africa via Rio de Janeiro were tried by the Inquisition for disseminating *bolsas de mandingas,* handcrafted pouches filled with natural substances and handwritten orations that performed a virtue for the carrier.[52] In the mid-eighteenth century, as black bodies and African cultural artefacts were becoming increasingly visible in the metropolis, anxieties were heightened by episodes such as this, as they exemplified the detrimental consequences that peer knowledge communication between black people of enslaved origins could have in Portugal. Similarly, Manoel, Teresa, and Maria's deepening friendship, alleged to be the channels through which the murder of Maria's owner was plotted, exposes how black Afro-Brazilian intimacies were

[51] NASCIMENTO, S. P. Wives Walking Away: concubinage, adultery, and violence in late colonial Bahia. **Women's History Review**, 2021. DOI:10.1080/09612025.2021.1908505.
[52] LAHON, D. Op. Cit, pp. 76-77; SWEET, J. H. Domingos Álvares. *Op. Cit.*, p.182.

construed along spatialized racial lines as a site for insidious machinations against white Europeans.

Teresa and Maria prepared João da Fonseca's dinner together in his home on Poço do Borratem road, suggesting a large degree of friendship and familiarity. Had Teresa and Maria met in the nearby Rossio, the bustling town square in the heart of Lisbon teeming with street vendors, beggars, and prostitutes? This possibility is strongly hinted at in the Sentence, as the judges claim Teresa learnt of João's fortune through her activities as a fruit-seller. As we saw above, enslaved and free(d) black female street vendors filled the steps of the Royal All Saints' Hospital built along the eastern stretch of the square. Known as the 'praça nova da fruta', Rossio was one of the most important public spaces for street vendors to hawk their wares, and Teresa almost certainly would have been a regular presence.[53] Given its proximity to Poço do Borratem and the Rossio's long tradition as a common space bridging the rural inland with the urbanized centre through which agricultural activity flowed, it is highly probable that Maria frequently visited the Rossio to buy supplies and cultivate friendship and kin networks, chatting with the women selling their wares to find out the local gossip.[54] Maybe another vendor introduced Maria and Teresa; perhaps Maria was a regular customer of Teresa's, through which an intimate friendship blossomed. The social interaction between Manoel, Teresa, and Maria demonstrates a large degree of mobility and autonomy on Maria's part too, which enabled her to maintain friendships with free(d) men and women from outside of her owner's household. This autonomy likely increased during João's long absence abroad, as he had only recently returned from Pará in Brazil before his murder. Following this spatial sequence of events that initiated contact between Teresa and Manoel in the Olarias jail and between Maria and Teresa in the spaces between the Rossio and Poço do Borratem, Teresa was the nexus of their diasporic network and entanglement that entrenched Africa and Brazil in the Portuguese metropolis. However, it was Maria's indictment of Padre Manuel de Souza Novais Trovão that drew a Brazilian

[53]Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo. Hospital de São José. PT-TT-HSJ-A-D-A-005-0274-000004.
[54] CALVO, D. M. The meaning of centrality and margin in Lisbon's Rossio: Spatializing urban processes before and after the 1755 earthquake. **Portuguese Journal of Social Sciences**, v. 14, n. 2, pp. 124, 2015.

priest directly into their orbit, and indirectly entangled colonial Brazilian socio-cultural values in the wider empire.

The asymmetrical dynamics of power in the accusation of a black enslaved woman of a white ecclesiastic were perhaps not as unequal as they first appear. Portuguese metropolitan stereotypes of Brazil were formed for all layers of colonial society, not just the enslaved and free(d) population. Foremost in imperial circulations of information regarding the Brazilian clergy was their propensity to sin and engagement in overtly criminal offences. Their involvement in relationships of concubinage was only the tip of the iceberg; among other sins, many priests were guilty of simony, extortion, and participation in the contraband of gold. The woefully low standards among Brazil's secular clergy gave rise to widespread discontent throughout the colony. In addition, the open nature of blackmail, extortion, and simony committed by clergymen was well-known even in the metropolis, and Brazilian priests' reputations preceded them.

Archival traces left about Padre Trovão are suggestive of a similar pattern of dubious conduct over his long career. Likely around the time of Teresa's sentencing and execution, Padre Trovão returned in 1772 to the northern Brazilian state of Pará to his parish Campina in the capital city Belém. Until his death in 1802, he was consistently embroiled in legal and ecclesiastical conflicts, all of which pivoted on his bishopric's complaints of insubordination that eventually (and unsuccessfully) led to ecclesiastic calls for Padre Trovão's suspension and removal from Belém.[55] His 'excesses and offenses committed against the Church of Pará' over at least three decades point to the possibility that his interactions with the neighbourhood of Poço do Borratem may have consolidated the metropolitan reputation of colonial priests for their loose morals and penchant for criminal activity.[56] Suspicions may also have deepened due to his status as an outsider, largely unknown and hardly trusted by the local community. Even the accusation of a local Portuguese enslaved woman was more likely to be believed when

[55] Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino. AHU-CU-PARÁ, caixa 113, documento 8759; caixa 95, documento 7564.
[56] '...excessos e ofensas cometidas contra a igreja do Pará.' Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino. AHU-CU-PARÁ, caixa 122, document 9357.

directed towards a Brazilian, manipulating local standards valuing trust within the community and accentuated a 'deep-rooted mutual distrust' between metropolitan and colonial subjects.[57]

Despite empire-wide designations of colonial-born white men of European descent as 'Portuguese,' distinctions were frequently drawn between white colonial residents and those born and raised in Portugal. Drawn into each other's orbit, Teresa, Manoel, and Padre Trovão's Brazilianness presented different aspects of a paradox that tightened their entanglement in that historical moment, drawing them deeper into an imperial web of colonial interdependencies that was fraught with tensions directly emanating from their mutuality. At once of the empire and of the peripheries, Padre Trovão, Manoel, and Teresa embodied the problematic relations between the metropolis and its most important colony in the late eighteenth century. All three were crucial to the imperial project, albeit in widely diverse ways. In their different roles as colonial ecclesiastic and human chattel respectively, they contributed to the social, spiritual, and racial hierarchies that undergirded colonial experiences and reinforced the logic that replicated uneven relationships of power along sexual, racial, and status axes. Yet the ties that not only bound them to each other, but entangled them in the very fabric of empire, emanated from their Brazilian heritage, which ultimately served to reduce the gulf in social distance between them when relocated in the metropolis. Their Brazilian bodies colliding in Lisbon symbolically ruptured Portuguese ideological conceptions of imperial geographies, replicating a microcosm of colonial society *within* the centre of empire.

Against the Grain: Space, Power, and the Black Female Body

Most prominent in Teresa's biography is how spatial configurations of power moulded the significance of her corporeal trajectories. As she travelled from Brazil to Benavente and then to Lisbon, edging ever close to the centre of imperial power, a series of kinopolitical expulsions and (im)mobilizations emerge that ran counter

[57] RUSSELL-WOOD, A. J. R. Centers and Peripheries in the Luso-Brazilian World, 1500-1808. *In:* DANIELS, C; KENNEDY, M. V. (orgs.) **Negotiated empires: centers and peripheries in the Americas, 1500-1820**. New York and London: Routledge, 2002, p. 120.

to the spatial logic of the Portuguese empire. Teresa's trajectories across the empire reveal different degrees of coercion and agency, emphasizing the fraught tensions that enslaved and free(d) mobilities provoked in the Atlantic world. The kinopolitical expulsions that Teresa experienced demonstrate how the enslaved and free(d) were subject to a variety of forced migrations over their lifetime, regardless of their status. Her earlier years of enslavement in Brazil and the subsequent countervoyage on which she embarked exemplify the uneven terrain of captive mobilities. Her movements in the early part of her life would have fluctuated across a spectrum of coercion from relative autonomy in urban Salvador to real, physical confinement and immobilization aboard the countervoyage. Nor was this the only moment of corporal detention in her life. Her incarceration at the Olarias jail and then later in the Limoeira Crown Prison highlights how experiences of slavery and freedom overlapped, as Teresa's black female body was periodically immobilized in stark contrast with her freer movements in the streets of Lisbon and in João's home. Strung together, these instances of physical restrictions map out the cyclical nature of (im)mobilization in the lives of black women, offering them no sense of security as they spent each day in the knowledge that their bodies were not really their own.

Not only the geography changed for Teresa; her social entanglements and successful quest for manumission in Portugal forged ideological ruptures to the flow of power through this new landscape at the height of the Marquis de Pombal's power in the early 1770s. Her body charged physical and ideological spaces with new meanings of power in Lisbon, constituting a direct challenge to the Pombaline vision of destroyed metropolis being reconstructed as a modern bourgeois city poised to take its rightful place on the global stage. The Rossio, and the adjacent Poço do Borratem road where Teresa's alleged crime was committed, were situated at the centre of this struggle.

Unknown author, undated. A Praça do Rossio (com a fachada do Hospital Real de Todos os Santos em primeiro plano), e o Castelo de S. Jorge, antes do Terramoto de Lisboa de 1755. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

For centuries, the Rossio had been a public space open to individuals from all walks of life. But its history is also marked by the Crown's numerous attempts to alter this location into a centre of power, seizing the land of the dispossessed to build institutions of power and authority. Some headway was made in the fifteenth century as the Palácio dos Estaus was built along the northern edge of the square and the Hospital Real de Todos-os-Santos was constructed along its eastern face. Crucially, the Estaus palace became the seat of the Inquisition and its power resonated through the square as the Rossio was transformed into a site of religious authority and state-sanctioned violence. The Rossio was no longer an open space allowing free mobility for all individuals; a prison was established within the Estaus palace to immobilize those sentenced by the Inquisition, and the most important *autos-da-fé* were held in the Rossio as those sentences were carried out.[58] Furthermore, the royal hospital was a magnificent building that was to

[58] CASTELNAU-L'ESTOILE, C. *Op. Cit.*, p.197.

undergo an extension project in 1752, incorporating fourteen buildings along Betesga road, the Poço do Borratem road and the small square around its fountain.[59] In 1755, most of the Rossio and its adjacent buildings were destroyed by the earthquake and the project was put on hold, rejuvenated only in 1778 after Pombal's downfall.

Daniel Malet Calvo argues that the Rossio's reconstruction in the aftermath of the earthquake was the opportunity for state authorities, and in particular Pombal, to wrestle full control of this contested site of power and displace many of the Rossio's popular functions to outer districts of the city. In light of the ideological emphasis placed upon the Rossio as the symbolic site of modern power, the consistent trajectories of Teresa's mobility in and around this space force us to consider the significance of her body's presence and the acts that it committed in this location. Moving through the Rossio and its adjoining streets, Teresa occupied a paradoxical space. Hers was a body that belonged, part of the throng of black enslaved and freed women walking, talking, working in every corner of the Rossio. Yet her mobile black female body also invaded a space that was being constructed to symbolize power and authority. Her living presence in such a solemn space upended the ideological significance the new square was envisaged to impose.

It is here, in the space between the Rossio and Poço do Borratem, that Teresa's biography comes to an end, and with it the challenge and resistance that she embodied as she moved through this space. This was the site of João da Fonseca's gruesome murder, the crime Teresa was alleged to have committed, and the location of her execution. As her body was repossessed by the state, Teresa's final trajectory was one of coercion and violence. Leaving the Limoeira prison, Teresa slowly marched towards the hangman's rope, most likely located in the Rossio, a space already synonymous with state-sanctioned executions. Climbing onto the wooden gallows, she would have been immobilized once again, her hands sliced cleanly from her body before her hanging to ensure that she would not be able to loosen the rope as it slowly squeezed the life from her. Even in death, the violence against her body continued. Her noose was removed and she was decapitated. We

[59] Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo. Hospital de São José. PT-TT-HSJ-A-D-A-005-0274-000004.

do not know what happened to her corpse; most probably she was buried in an unmarked grave. But her head and her hands were mounted on tall spokes and were installed on the Poço do Borratem road, unavoidable as the masses bustled in and out of the Rossio. This ultimate act of violence delineates how the full force of the Portuguese empire immobilized Teresa for eternity, sketching out clearly the dimensions of power of the new modern metropolis in the geographical space of the Rossio and onto the corporal landscape of a freed black woman.

But perhaps Teresa de Jesus had the last laugh. Over her life, Teresa's mobility saw her edge ever closer to the seat of the empire, creating an alternate set of imperial geographies mapped out from the perspective of enslaved and free(d) black women. In her death, Teresa remained forever more at the very heart of the empire. Her body came to symbolize not only the intrinsic violence of imperial institutions and the asymmetry of power between the State and the dispossessed, but also the resistance of enslaved and free(d) black women to their forced displacement. Like her peers demanding recognition of their right to sell food in the Rossio without fear of violence or bribery, Teresa entrenched herself in a space that was at once for people exactly like her and for those who wielded enormous power and authority. Long after her death, Teresa's mutilated body was an ironic reminder of the staunch refusal of black enslaved and free(d) women to submit to the geographies of empire.

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