

The Making of a Slave-Trading Entrepôt: Rio de Janeiro in the Economic Spaces of Mining, 1565-1763

Leonardo Marques

Universidade Federal Fluminense
e-mail: lm@id.uff.br
ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1276-2769>

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ABSTRACT: This work explores the making of Rio de Janeiro as a key supplier of enslaved Africans to the silver and gold mining areas of Latin America over the early modern period. The city became a critical component of the South Atlantic system during the long seventeenth century, supplying captives to Spanish America in exchange for Peruvian silver. In the following century, it became an essential part of the Brazilian gold boom that radically transformed Portuguese America. The article discusses the role of coerced Amerindian and African labor in the creation of the basic city structures that allowed for the reproduction of those connections to mining zones and reflects on the broader meanings of this story, framing the specific history of Rio de Janeiro within the broader context of a capitalist world economy.

KEYWORDS: Colonial cities; Port cities; Brazil; Portuguese empire; Slavery; Slave trade; Coerced labor.

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RESUMEN: *La construcción de un centro de distribución de comercio de esclavos: Río de Janeiro en los espacios económicos de la minería, 1565-1763.*— Este artículo analiza la formación de Río de Janeiro como un proveedor principal de esclavos africanos para las zonas mineras de oro y plata en América Latina a lo largo de la era moderna. La ciudad se convirtió en un componente crítico del sistema del Atlántico Sur en el largo siglo XVII, con el suministro de cautivos a Hispanoamérica a cambio de plata peruana. En el siglo siguiente, se convirtió en un factor esencial del *boom* del oro brasileño que transformó radicalmente el espacio colonial. El artículo discute el papel del trabajo coercitivo de amerindios y africanos en la creación de las estructuras básicas de la ciudad, que permitieron la reproducción de aquellas conexiones a las zonas mineras. También reflexiona sobre los significados más amplios de esta historia, en el marco de la historia específica de Río de Janeiro, en el contexto más amplio de una economía-mundo capitalista.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Ciudades coloniales; Ciudades portuarias; Brasil; Imperio portugués; Esclavitud; Trata de esclavos; Trabajo forzado.

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RIO DE JANEIRO IN THE ECONOMIC SPACES OF MINING: THREE MOMENTS

One of the most important themes in the vast work of the great Brazilian historian Sérgio Buarque de Holanda was the role played by Spanish America in the development of colonial Brazil. The establishment of a general government in Brazil in 1549, for example, was chronologically so close to the discovery of Potosí in 1545 that connecting the two events seemed to be almost inevitable for him (Holanda, 2007, p. 123). Potosí did indeed have a profound impact on colonial Brazil because the search for precious metals had been one of the main motors of European overseas expansion since the late Middle Ages. In America, the myth of Eldorado was in part stimulated by the native groups themselves, eager as many of them were to get rid of the new visitors by redirecting them to more distant lands (Livi Bacci, 2012 p. 23). But the news of Potosí provided a more concrete example for the European settlers. In Brazil, the dream of finding a comparable mountain of silver or reaching Peru itself through the interior stimulated the organization of a large number of expeditions in the following century and a half, profoundly shaping the early history of the colony (Holanda, 2010).

The entanglement of colonial Brazil with Spanish America was to a large extent the product of the integrated and contradictory trajectory of Iberian expansion in the late Middle Ages, which culminated with a number of treaties and the creation of an Iberian Atlantic system (Berbel, Marquese & Parron, 2016). The most famous of these treaties, the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas, had a number of short and long-term consequences for the history of the Americas. By attempting to establish a monopoly over the New World, a *mare clausum*, it soon stimulated the reaction of other European seaborne nations to push for a *mare liberum*, with France playing the most prominent role among them, as evidenced by the predominance of their corsairs in the first half of the sixteenth century. Thus, from the very beginning French ships were visiting the New World, with a few efforts to establish permanent colonies by the second half of the century, including the famous France Antarctique in Guanabara Bay and a number of other places in North America. These actions pushed the Iberian nations to reassert the terms of the Treaty of Tordesillas and their control over the Atlantic, with a number of conflicts temporarily driving away the French (Abreu, 2010, p. 51; Lane, 1998, p. 18). News of the riches of Spanish Ameri-



FIGURE 1. Rio de Janeiro in the eighteenth century. Source: <https://bdlb.bn.gov.br/acervo/handle/20.500.12156.3/15653>. Main places mentioned in the article: 1. First settlement in 1565; 2. Ilha das cobras; 3. Central area (Câmara Municipal, Alfândega, Mesa do Bem Comum, Casa dos Contos); 4. Morro da Viúva; 5. Convento Santo Antônio; 6. Convento do Carmo; 7. Santa Cruz Fortress; 8. Laje Fortress; 9. São João da Barra Fortress; 10. Carioca River in Laranjeiras; 11. Carioca River in Flamengo; 12. Santo Antônio Lagoon; 13. Carioca Aqueduct; 14. Praia do Carmo; 15. Rua Direita; 16. Boqueirão Lagoon; 17. Morro do Castelo.

ca, however, continued to stimulate the actions of Dutch, English, and French rivals.

The Portuguese visited the Guanabara Bay in the first half of the sixteenth century but the search for precious metals, ironically, may have been one of the reasons why they did not establish a more permanent settlement there. Unlike São Vicente and the São Paulo plateau, which were connected by an active ancient indigenous path, the Rio de Janeiro coast seemed to be effectively isolated from the area beyond the Serra do Mar by the sixteenth century (in spite of some evidence that some routes may have existed in the deeper past), thus making expeditions in search of precious metals in the interior much more complicated (Bernardes, 1990, pp. 15-16; Venâncio, 1999). The discovery and development of Potosí, however, piqued the interest of Portuguese authorities and explorers, who realized the strategic significance of this area for the ongoing settlement of southern Brazil and the growing expeditions into the interior. Settling Rio would eliminate the threat of attacks not only from foreigners but also from the French-allied Tamoios, an indigenous group that occupied the coastal area between Rio de Janeiro and northern São Paulo. Thus, in 1565, Estácio de Sá and a group of settlers founded the city of São Sebastião do Rio de Janeiro (Fig. 1), waging a two-year war to expel the French and defeat the local Tamoios with the help of Arariboia and the Temiminós (Almeida, 2013, pp. 47-81). In the following century, other powers also perceived the strategic significance of the region in relation to Potosí. In 1635, for example, the Vice-Queen of Portugal called for new efforts to protect the city because of rumors that the Dutch were preparing an attack in order to eventually reach the La Plata region.¹

The power of Potosí continued to shape the history of Brazil in the following decades. The city quickly became one of the world's largest after the discovery of silver, with a population of 50,000 people by the early 1570s. Three decades later that number had risen to 120,000 (Lane, 2019, pp. 37, 115). Supplying this vast population and their economic activities depended on agriculture, livestock raising, and the manufacturing of textiles and other goods in the valleys of La Plata, Cochabamba, Tucumán, and Chile. This wide range of activities formed what historian Carlos Sempat Assadourian called the "Peruvian economic space" (Sempat, 1982, pp. 18-55). Settlers in Brazil were quick to take advantage of the opportunities offered by this economic space, producing an entangled history that blurred the frontiers between the Spanish and Portuguese empires in the southern parts of South America. Networks connecting the populations of São Vicente and Asunción through riverine routes already appeared by the second half of the sixteenth century (Vilardaga, 2017). The second foundation of Buenos Aires in 1580 in turn produced new connections between Brazilian ports and Andean circuits (Canabrava, 1984).

The Andean silver that lubricated those routes was exchanged for a number of goods but the key one was a living commodity: enslaved Africans. One of the long-term consequences of the Treaty of Tordesillas was to limit

Spanish access to Africa, a situation that marked its entire imperial history. The main formal solution until the late eighteenth century was the *asiento de negros*, a contract sold to non-Spanish merchants that allowed for the introduction of a stipulated number of enslaved Africans into Spanish America during a specific period of time. The main illegal one was smuggling. On the other side of the Atlantic, the Portuguese built the most efficient branch of the transatlantic slave trade. After failing to find mountains of silver, which was the initial goal of the Portuguese expedition that conquered Angola in the 1570s, the settlers created a tight structure for the supply of captives to the Americas, in this case meaning mainly Spanish America. As Luiz Felipe de Alencastro argues, the Portuguese Crown largely profited from the slave trade since the fifteenth century, more than from slavery itself, thus refusing to restrict slave exports to non-Portuguese territories in spite of metropolitan and colonial demands. This strategy reached its first peak during the Iberian Union (1580-1640), when Portuguese slave traders successively became the owners of the *asientos* (Alencastro, 2018, p. 26). It was this traffic to Spanish America that gave the Portuguese access to silver, allowing the maintenance of their central commercial role in Asia (since bullion was crucial for those exchanges) and stimulating Portuguese support for the joining of the two crowns in 1580 (Schwartz, 2008, p. 211).

It was in this context that Rio de Janeiro moved from being a strategic military outpost to becoming a slave-trading entrepôt. Favored by geographical proximity and the system of currents and winds, but also dependent on the conscious actions of specific groups of people, Rio de Janeiro increasingly became an important stop on the route between West-Central Africa and the Rio de la Plata. The birth of the slave trade to Rio came from the actions of three key figures: Paulo Dias Novais (the conqueror of Angola), Salvador Correia de Sá (Rio de Janeiro's governor), and João Guterres Valério (a slave trader who allegedly owned the Ilha das Cobras, in the Guanabara Bay, during most of the 1580s, using it as a slave disembarkation point). This traffic, which had Buenos Aires as the next stop, from where slaves were redistributed across the Peruvian economic space, was the main force behind Rio de Janeiro's development over the first half of the seventeenth century. A key figure here was the grandson of Salvador Correia de Sá, Salvador Correia de Sá e Benevides, who further developed the efforts of his grandfather and played a central role in the transformation of Rio de Janeiro into a slave-trading entrepôt over the seventeenth century (Abreu, 2010, vol. 2, pp. 17-35).

All too often historians of Rio de Janeiro have looked at the history of sugar production in the captaincy and the connections to silver-producing Spanish America in dualistic terms when in fact this was largely an integrated, connected history, as Alencastro has cogently shown. There was already some sugar production in the captaincy at the turn of the century and both Salvador de Sá, the elder, and Paulo Dias Novais were directly involved in it, but this was a minor part of activities in this early peri-

od. The production of manioc, according to Alencastro, seems to have been the main force behind the Atlanticization of Rio de Janeiro during that period. Manioc flour, the so-called *farinha de guerra*, supplied not only the local population and other parts of Brazil but also African populations in Africa and on board the slave ships that increasingly connected Angola to the city. By the early 1600s, Rio de Janeiro exported 680 tons of manioc flour to Angola per year, becoming one of the main staples of the food supply of slave ships and consequently cheapening the Atlantic crossing (Alencastro, 2018, p. 256). This connection was so strong that in 1620 the Municipal Council established that any ship leaving Rio with manioc should return with black slaves (Coaracy 1965, p. 54). This in turn allowed for the expansion of investments in sugar production, with the number of *engenhos* quickly expanding from 3 in 1600 to 60 by the late 1620s. This expansion was also largely favored by the introduction of the vertical three-roller mill, carried from the silver mining *patios* of Peru to the sugar plantations of Brazil. But these sugar plantations never reached the opulence of their counterparts in Bahia and Pernambuco. In 1645, for example, the Municipal Council complained to the Portuguese king about the lack of slaves, the low production of sugar, and the limits this imposed on commerce in the city, which was accompanied by a general sense of insecurity in the maritime trade (thus also indicating the necessity to invest on fortifications).² Sugar production nonetheless increased over the century (Abreu, 2010 vol. 2, pp. 77-98). By the second half of the century, they also became great producers of another key staple of the slave trade: the *cachaça*, a Brazilian spirit made from sugar that became increasingly popular in Angola. In this sense, while demanding and absorbing part of the enslaved Africans that arrived in Rio de Janeiro, the sugar sector also contributed to the traffic to La Plata by furnishing one of the main goods that was traded by slaves in Angola (Alencastro, 2018, pp. 299-301; Abreu, 2010 vol. 2, p. 33).

No other figure better exemplifies this integrated history than Salvador de Sá e Benevides himself, a sugar producer who owned hundreds of slaves in Rio de Janeiro but was also an *encomendero* in Spanish America after marrying Catalina de Velasco, widow of a great Spanish proprietor of La Plata and niece of a Peruvian viceroy. In 1636, Salvador de Sá offered to build a *trapique* (in this case meaning a warehouse) in Rio to facilitate and organize the sugar trade, receiving the right to weigh all the sugar coming out of the captaincy for the price of 40 réis per box, and an additional amount to keep it in the warehouse. A few years later he managed to push the Municipal Council to make it a perpetual right (which only came to an end by 1850 after the payment of a large compensation by the Brazilian empire) (Coaracy, 1965, pp. 87-88). According to Boxer, in 1637 Salvador de Sá already had 700 slaves working in his sugar plantations and cattle properties. Still, he remained interested in the trade to La Plata until the end of his life. With the significant decrease in this trade in the aftermath of the Portuguese restoration of 1640, he called for the conquest of Buenos

Aires, which should then be fortified to operate as a strategic point for the settlement of southern Brazil. His subsequent efforts in the reconquest of Angola from the Dutch in 1648 can also be read—and was read at the time—as part of a broader attempt to recreate the system that had been in full operation during the Iberian Union (Boxer, 1973, pp. 183-184; Alencastro, 2018, pp. 218-222).

The 1660s and 70s were a period of crisis in Rio de Janeiro, and marked by a broader bullion famine in the Atlantic world that stimulated new efforts to search for precious metals and kept the interest in the old silver trade of La Plata alive. Salvador de Sá himself organized a number of expeditions in search of precious metals during those years. The foundation of the colony of Sacramento in 1680 was also a direct consequence of the crisis, with Rio de Janeiro's elite playing a central role in it and Salvador de Sá himself pushing the Crown on this matter (Boxer, 1973, p. 398). In 1679 the new governor of Rio de Janeiro, Manuel Lôbo, arrived in Rio with instructions to gather all the necessary resources to establish a fortified colony in the La Plata region, which he did in January of the following year. Four years later, in 1684, the Municipal Council established that the Spanish American half-*reales* should be the equivalent of 40 réis, in an attempt to regulate the circulation of silver in the city, which had become voluminous (Coaracy, 1965, pp. 201, 205, 210; Pereira, 2021).

While Sacramento relieved the situation in Rio, a radical change effectively came with the gold discoveries of the late seventeenth century in Minas Gerais. The main role of the city continued to be the same: a slave-trading entrepôt. But this time it was much better located and prepared to take advantage of this new economic space, contributing even more directly to its development. A new road to the gold mining zone was built (the *Caminho Novo*) while a wide economic space emerged connecting cattle-raising areas of the Northeast and the South. Food production dramatically increased in Minas Gerais and many other parts of the colony (Carrara, 2007; Menz, 2009). Part of the gold even went to the neighboring territories of Spanish America to be exchanged not only for silver but also for the many mules that became so necessary in the vast transportation system that connected these mining zones to other parts of the colony (Marques, forthcoming; Gil, 2020). Along with Bahia, Rio de Janeiro became the main supplier of captives for this vast economic space, becoming one of the largest slave-trading ports of the Americas (a close second to Jamaica by the 1750s in numbers of disembarked slaves). By 1751 the number of people living in the city was 29.147, with a significant rise in the number of services and activities available (Lima, 2008, p. 59). As one would expect, the number of goldsmiths radically increased, with 440 of these professionals working there by 1766 (Pesavento, 2009, p. 179). These worked not only with gold but also with silver, which continued to flow into the city as captives were redirected to Spanish America through La Plata (Bohorquez, 2020).

By 1763 the city became the capital of Portuguese America, another sign of the radical transformations brought about by gold. By then, however, the volume

of gold extracted from the Brazilian interior that passed through the city had already been declining for a few years. By the late 1760s, the annual volume of gold coming out of Minas Gerais was almost half of what it had been by the late 1730s (Pinto, 1979, p. 114). Still, the city continued to expand as a slave-trading entrepôt. As gold mining in Brazil declined, the agricultural renaissance of the late eighteenth century kept the demand for slave labor high along with Spanish American markets. By the nineteenth century, not only demand for labor within the city increased after the arrival of the Portuguese Court in 1808 but the expansion of a coffee sector in the Paraíba Valley also ensured that the city would continue to play its role as the main slave-trading entrepôt, a role that continued even after the suppression of the transatlantic slave trade in the early 1850s, with the emergence of a domestic slave trade to supply captives for the expanding coffee frontier (Marquese, 2013).

THE SLAVE TRADE TO AND FROM RIO DE JANEIRO

Current estimates point to the embarkation of approximately 702,000 enslaved Africans on vessels to Rio de Janeiro between 1580 and 1763, with around 610,000 surviving the Middle Passage.³ The vast majority of these individuals came from West-Central Africa, although a few thousand were purchased in the Bight of Benin by the eighteenth century as slave traders started to carry gold for transactions in the area (Marques & Lopes, 2019, p. 10). Part of these slaves remained within the captaincy to work in the sugar and other small producing sectors of the region or to perform activities in the city like those described below. As a slave-trading entrepôt, however, most of them were redirected to the economic spaces of silver and gold. Unfortunately, there is still very little work on how these transactions took place and the characteristics of these intra-American routes, but the scholarship on the subject has been growing lately (Eltis, Wheat, Borucki, 2020).

One of the characteristics of the intra-American slave trade to La Plata, at least in this early period, was the smaller number of slaves per vessel. While 320 enslaved Africans were on average embarked on ships sailing directly from Africa to La Plata between 1580 and 1700, with 253 surviving the Atlantic crossing, ships from Brazil usually left with a mean number of 56 captives (with 54 surviving the voyage). Ships were smaller too: while the average tonnage of vessels performing transatlantic slave voyages to La Plata was 228 for that same period, the average on the intra-American slave trade as a whole during those same years was 57. Unfortunately, there is no data on the tonnage of specific ships going from Brazil to La Plata, but the general image of smaller ships in this route fits the descriptions offered by scholars of this trade: the number of slaves per ship was smaller and accompanied by a wider variety of goods. Part of this traffic may in fact have been conducted as part of the coastal trade between Rio and the southern captaincies (Pereira, 2021).

Thus, a number of captives arriving from Africa were sold in Rio de Janeiro and transferred to the smaller ships—some of them also coming from Buenos Aires—that carried captives along with a number of other goods. Another characteristic of these voyages was that they usually took place during the summer, between December and March, when navigating the shallow waters of La Plata became easier (Schultz, 2016, p. 76). Of the 85 intra-American slave voyages to La Plata for which we have the date of arrival, 63 took place during the summer.

We know very little about how these transactions took place. By the eighteenth century, Nireu Cavalcanti describes the role of *atravessadores* (literally “crossers”) in the slave trade to Rio, merchants who purchased the slaves right after the arrival of the ship to resell them later for higher prices. Their practices led to conflicts in the Municipal Council after complaints from mill owners that, coming from more distant areas, arrived after the *atravessadores* had already purchased most slaves. These individuals nonetheless received the support of some great merchants and local authorities, who argued that they made transactions faster, allowing ships to unload all their cargo and quickly return to Africa for more. Moreover, they purchased many of the weaker and sick slaves, who were usually rejected by traditional buyers, taking care of them until their recovery in order to make better sales later (Cavalcanti, 2005, pp. 38-41). It is unclear how widespread these practices were in seventeenth-century Rio, but the Municipal Council did make reference to the activities of *atravessadores* already in 1626. After a number of complaints from the population, the Council called for closing the doors of the commercial establishments owned by those individuals, who purchased all the goods entering the port with monopolistic practices that made everything much more expensive (Coaracy, 1965, p. 69). There are no explicit references to slaves in these early mentions of *atravessadores*, but it seems likely that they also purchased them. Since voyages to La Plata usually took place during the summer, they could wait for the recovery of captives in time for a new voyage South or wait for the arrival of ships from La Plata in search of captives.

Estimating how many people arrived in Rio de Janeiro during the seventeenth century and how many were taken to La Plata depends on a considerable amount of guesswork. Unfortunately, hard data on the slave trade to Brazil during the seventeenth century is very fragile. The estimates offered by David Eltis and David Richardson (2008) are that Southeast Brazil (meaning mainly Rio de Janeiro) received almost 226,000 enslaved Africans between 1580 and 1700, a number they reached by considering the slave trade to Rio de Janeiro to have been equivalent to 70% of the traffic to Bahia. This number, however, seems to be too high when we compare the two captaincies and their capitals. In the 1670s, the population of the city of Rio de Janeiro was one-third of Salvador’s (Krause, 2018, p. 73). In that same decade, the captaincy of Bahia had 160 *engenhos* while Rio de Janeiro had 125, but the latter were much smaller, cheaper, simpler, and had fewer slaves. Father Antônio Vieira referred to

the latter as mere “engenhocas,” with three of them not being equivalent to a big *engenho*. In fact, the mean number of captives seems to corroborate Vieira’s comment: while Bahian *engenhos* usually had between 60 and 80 captives per unit, Rio de Janeiro had 27 (Abreu, 2010 vol. 2, pp. 94, 99-102). Moreover, the procedure adopted by Eltis and Richardson also does not allow for the shifts in the sugar sector of each region that may have accounted for different—and interconnected—oscillations over that period. As Thiago Krause argues, the great expansion of Rio de Janeiro sugar mills took place during the 1640s, when their number doubled, precisely when the northeastern production was, in turn, most affected by the war against the Dutch. As the Bahian production recovered by the 1660s, the rate of growth of sugar mills in Rio significantly decreased. Only by the end of the century that a new crisis in Bahia positively reflected in a new period of expansion in Rio de Janeiro (Krause, 2015, p. 19).

It is important to note that in spite of all transformations, the La Plata route was only one of the routes responsible for the traffic to Spanish America and Rio de Janeiro was not the only port supplying these captives. In 1704, for example, Rio de Janeiro authorities wrote to the king to inform him that they allowed a slave ship from Bahia to continue its voyage to Buenos Aires since they had no specific instructions regarding cases like this and that the ship had been personally authorized by the Brazilian governor general to carry on the enterprise.⁴ In her classic work, Alice Canabrava (1984, p. 123) actually emphasized the centrality of Bahia in this trade based on the large volume of silver that, according to contemporary observers, circulated in Salvador, an argument that has more recently been reinforced by the work of Maurício de Almeida Abreu (2010, vol. 2, p. 24). Moutoukias (1988, p. 65) also emphasized the role played by Bahia in this inter-imperial traffic, an argument that has also been repeated by other scholars, but offers no evidence for the assertion. Kara Schultz, however, has shown in a recent study that of all slaves brought to Buenos Aires between 1586 and 1680, for which there is data on the specific original Brazilian port of embarkation, around 65% came from Rio de Janeiro.

Eltis, Wheat, and Borucki have recently estimated that 42,366 enslaved Africans were carried from Brazil to Buenos Aires between 1580 and 1700. Extending the timeframe and applying this share to the numbers offered by Eltis, Borucki, and Wheat point to 27,617 captives carried from Rio de Janeiro to La Plata between 1580 and 1700. This also seems to indicate that the estimates of the slave trade to Rio offered by Eltis and Richardson for the 17th century may be too high. Considering their numbers, the 27,617 captives leaving Rio would be equivalent to 12% of all captives that arrived in the captaincy during the period discussed here. In the mid-eighteenth century, when the economic space of gold was by then draining most captives arriving in Rio, Fábio Kühn (2017, p. 114) argues that around 10% of them were going South. In the absence of gold mining in the previous century, and having only a peripheral sugar sector, it seems likely that the

percentage of captives going to La Plata was larger than 12% (even though this participation obviously oscillated over time). On more than one occasion, the Portuguese Crown established that one-third of all slaves carried to Rio de Janeiro should remain in Brazil, indicating that merchants were at times carrying most slaves to Buenos Aires (Pereira, 2021). With lower or higher estimates, it is clear that the volume of enslaved people passing through the port of Rio de Janeiro was significant enough to generate a demand for services and infrastructure that in turn generated a growing demand for labor.

For the eighteenth century, sources are better and the numbers more realistic since this was when the city did indeed become a central slave-trading entrepôt, providing captives along with Bahia to the expanding economic space of Brazilian gold. Between 1701 and 1760, the Eltis and Richardson estimates are that approximately 363,000 captives were disembarked in Southeast Brazil (meaning mainly Rio), most of whom were taken to the expanding economic space of gold. As we have seen, the traffic to Spanish America nonetheless continued to take place and Eltis, Wheat, and Borucki estimate that 28,200 were taken from all Brazilian ports between 1701 and 1760 to La Plata, which is lower but not far from the 10% offered by Kühn.

Unfortunately, we also know very little about the dynamics of the slave route connecting Rio de Janeiro to the Brazilian mining zones. By the end of the century, a more specialized slave trade seems to have emerged, with *comboieiros de negros* carrying exclusive cargoes of slaves (12 captives on average). The earlier period may have been less specialized, with exchanges involving a large number of other goods although a more accurate assessment remains to be done (Chaves, 1999). Aldair Rodrigues has found a significant number of merchants that were described as *comboieiros de negros*, but these categories were usually very fluid at the time, and it seems likely that many of those individuals engaged in other trades (Rodrigues, 2009, p. 195). The main slave route was the *Caminho Novo*, opened in the early eighteenth century to offer a safer and faster route to the mining zones (before then the main route was by sea from Rio to Paraty and, from there, through an ancient indigenous path into the interior). But it was nonetheless a difficult path, which started in the rivers that flowed into the Guanabara Bay. In 1727, the Rio de Janeiro governor complained to the king about the lack of paddlers to cross the rivers Paraíba and Paraibuna, near the *Caminho Novo*, and that Garcia Rodrigues—one of the main responsible for creating the route—refused to lend his slaves for that end (Straforini, 2012, p. 91).⁵ The crossing of mountains and rivers across the route thus still made necessary a considerable amount of labor, not least to carry goods before a more appropriate route allowed for the use of horses and mules, with a large number of Amerindian and African slaves performing that labor between the coast and the mining zones. Even after the use of mules became more common, the animals had to be unloaded in parts that were too straight, thus making necessary to use captives to carry them. Moreover, slaves

were used to carry the more fragile goods that were sold in the mining zones (Zemella, 1990, pp. 135-136; Furta-do, 1999, pp. 265-266).

WHO BUILT RIO DE JANEIRO?

It has become something of a cliché for historians to cite Bertold Brecht's *Questions of a worker who reads*, but that does not make the poem any less powerful for it does indeed raise essential questions. "Did the kings haul up the lumps of rock," Brecht's worker asks in relation to the construction of the Thebes of the seven gates, a question that can be similarly asked about the many remains of the past that are still with us. Walking in contemporary Rio de Janeiro one may wonder about who built the colonial churches, the Carioca Aqueduct, or the many fortifications that can be seen across the Guanabara Bay. From our knowledge of the past, even the absence of certain landmarks raises similar questions: Who destroyed the Morro das Mangueiras? Who drained the many swamps and lakes that made life in the city so difficult until the late nineteenth century? Who produced the radical transformation that allowed for the construction of the city of Rio de Janeiro in this peculiar location?

Fortifying the city to protect the flows of slaves and other goods was one of the earliest and most important steps for the construction of a slave-trading entrepôt, since English, French, and Dutch rivals constantly sought to disrupt the Iberian monopoly over the New World (Lane, 1998). Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, local authorities complained of the necessity to better fortify the city, at times establishing different strategies (such as specific taxes) in order to fund these buildings.⁶ Fortifications in Rio de Janeiro were at first made of *taipa* (mud-based constructions), as was the case with many other buildings at the time. One of the first natural resources to be explored by the Portuguese settlers, Maurício de Abreu notes, was mud, which allowed for the production of bricks and tiles, with a number of brickyards appearing near the Carioca River during the seventeenth century (Abreu, 2010, pp. 243-244). The main problem was that many *taipa* buildings did not last very long. By 1619, the Municipal Council called for the construction of a new building for the prison since the old *taipa* one was about to collapse (Coaracy, 1965, p. 50). *Taipa* buildings continued to be erected throughout the colonial era and beyond, but the geological characteristics of Rio de Janeiro also allowed for the widespread use of stones. In fact, the number of buildings made of stone in the city became larger than their *taipa* counterparts by the second half of the seventeenth century (Abreu, 2010 vol. 2, p. 308). There is also some evidence that buildings made of stone were more common in Rio de Janeiro than in most other parts of colonial Brazil (Almeida & Junior, 2012).

Fortifications and buildings made of stone and lime are certainly more resistant and durable, but they also demand a much greater amount of labor. Many of the first quarries were created and explored by religious orders, who used the Amerindians under their control and a

growing number of enslaved Africans to extract stones for their buildings. The Benedictines, for example, extracted stones from the Ilha das Cobras and the Morro da Viúva to build their church while the Carmelites used the Ilha das Enxadas for the construction of the Convento do Carmo, all of them with permission from the Municipal Council. These religious orders also allowed their laborers to be employed in public enterprises, as was the case in the construction of the Santa Cruz Fortress by Martim de Sá, one of the main defensive spots of the Guanabara Bay (Coaracy, 1965, pp. 48, 50, 60). Perhaps even more common was for authorities to ask for the help of the wider free population of the city, which in fact meant the use of their slaves. For the construction of the Laje fortress in 1644 (a long process that extended into the eighteenth century), proposed by Salvador de Sá e Benevides a few years earlier, the Portuguese king called for a contribution from local residents with their "servants and slaves and whatever else they can." (Coaracy, 1965, p. 122). The following year the Rio de Janeiro governor asked all free inhabitants to share one of their slaves each for repairing and improving existing fortifications. Similar examples abound. This seems to have been the pattern of the construction of many other public buildings during the colonial era. In the early eighteenth century, with the gold discoveries and the subsequent French invasion of the Guanabara Bay, new fortifications were built and old ones restored. By 1748, the Santa Cruz fortress had 30 soldiers and between 50 and 60 slaves cleaning and performing other services (Ferrez, 1972, p. 80).

References to the labor process itself in all these constructions are extremely scarce. We do know, however, that an incredible amount of labor was necessary to extract and process all materials in the first place. In the early history of Cuba, Manuel Moreno Fraginals argues that it was not rare to have more slaves employed in building the fortifications of Havana than in plantations. Moreover, he continues, "as soon as the hills near the city were devastated, the new explored quarries were more than 25 km distant from the basis of the construction site, and from them, around two million blocks were extracted, cut, and transported." (Moreno Fraginals, 2005, p. 102). In Rio de Janeiro, as we have seen, a number of quarries had been established since the early days to explore its hills of granite and gneiss, but these were mostly controlled by the religious orders, making it necessary for those directly interested in their use to extract stones in the more distant areas or pay for them (Abreu, 2010, vol. 2, p. 337), thus in part resembling the situation in Havana. Consequently, conflicts eventually emerged between the governor and religious orders over the use of those resources.⁷ Moreover, some fortifications were not near the quarries, also leading to additional efforts. In 1646, the governor of Rio de Janeiro wrote to the Portuguese Crown that he had been working on the fortress in São João da Barra, "bringing all the officers and Indians that are necessary, gathering with great work the materials because they are scarce and because of the distance from the city to the fortress" (Coaracy, 1965, p. 23). By the mid-eighteenth century, when

the gold boom had already radically transformed the interior of Brazil, a number of former slaves captured in maroons in the distant captaincy of Goiás were carried to Rio and put to work in the renovation of the Villegaignon fortress.⁸ In sum, the demand for workers in these fortifications was enormous and not always easily fulfilled. The act of building itself seems to have become a business at some point, with Salvador de Sá e Benevides, not surprisingly, becoming one of its main beneficiaries.⁹ Eventually he would be denounced for, among other things, building precarious fortifications with his slaves for extremely high prices (Boxer, 1973, p. 152).

Besides the extraction and processing of stones, the other main material for these fortifications was lime. In the case of Rio de Janeiro, the main source for producing lime were shells, which could be gathered from the sea, beaches, or from ancient constructions known as *sambaquis*. The latter were monumental indigenous shell mounds on the Brazilian shoreline that could be 30 meters high and 9,000 years old (although most have been dated as having between 2,000 and 4,000 years), having ritualistic and mortuary functions (Gaspar *et al.*, 2008, pp. 319-320). By burning these shells, their calcium carbonate becomes the caustic calcium oxide, known as quicklime, which in turn can be transformed into calcium hydroxide by mixing it with water. It is this last version, traditionally known as slaked lime, that was used as lime mortar in multiple constructions. Already in the late sixteenth century, the Jesuit Fernão Cardim noted how the lime made from these oyster shell structures had been used in a number of buildings in Bahia (Calazans, 2016, p. 67). By the early nineteenth century, Saint-Hilaire described part of the labor involved in it: “Near some islands we saw blacks that, with water up to their waist, gathered shellfish. Since there are no calcium stones near Rio de Janeiro, they use the lime from shells. To prepare it, they distribute them in big cones, alternating layers of shell with layers of wood, and burn them. The labor of collecting shellfish in the water is of the most unfavorable to the health of the blacks and frequently gives them dangerous diseases.” (Souto 2016, pp.

63-64). It seems likely that the smoke from the burning process and the manipulation of quicklime also brought its share of problems for those slaves (Fig. 2). One of the most impressive aspects of this story is that the coerced labor of Africans was used to exploit the embodied labor (what Marx called “dead labor”) of ancient peoples that could be found in the *sambaquis*, which were destroyed to produce lime (Abreu, 1957, pp. 110-111). Some of the main buildings of Rio de Janeiro thus carry these layers of time of a very *longue durée*.

A key resource of any port city, and even more critical for a slave-trading port, is fresh water. During the seventeenth century, settlers sent their Amerindian and African slaves to grab water from the river in the Laranjeiras Valley or in the estuary in present-day Flamengo, supplying not only their own units but also selling it to others in the streets. The first efforts to build a canal to carry the water to a location nearer the urban area were taken in 1617, when a tax on wines was established to finance these works. In the following decade, a new attempt was made, with the hiring of a professional that should have 20 Amerindians or African slaves at his disposal for the enterprise. By the 1670s, after a number of complaints about disturbances caused by the water-carrying slaves, another attempt at the construction of a canal made of lime and stone was made, this time with the hiring of 50 native laborers for the task. The timing between the complaints and the new efforts to erect the aqueduct seems to support the argument put forward by Jorun Poettering (2017, p. 162) that the project may have been connected to an attempt to better control the slave population of the city. By the end of the 1670s, Jesuit priests complained that the pay (7 sticks of cotton textiles along with supplies of food) of their indigenous laborers was too low and started to use them in other tasks (Coaracy, 1965, pp. 44, 59, 188, 191-192, 198).¹⁰ The construction of the Carioca aqueduct (Fig. 3) would only be concluded in the following century, during Gomes Freire de Andrade’s governorship, when a new round of reforms came with the pressures created by the new economic space of gold.

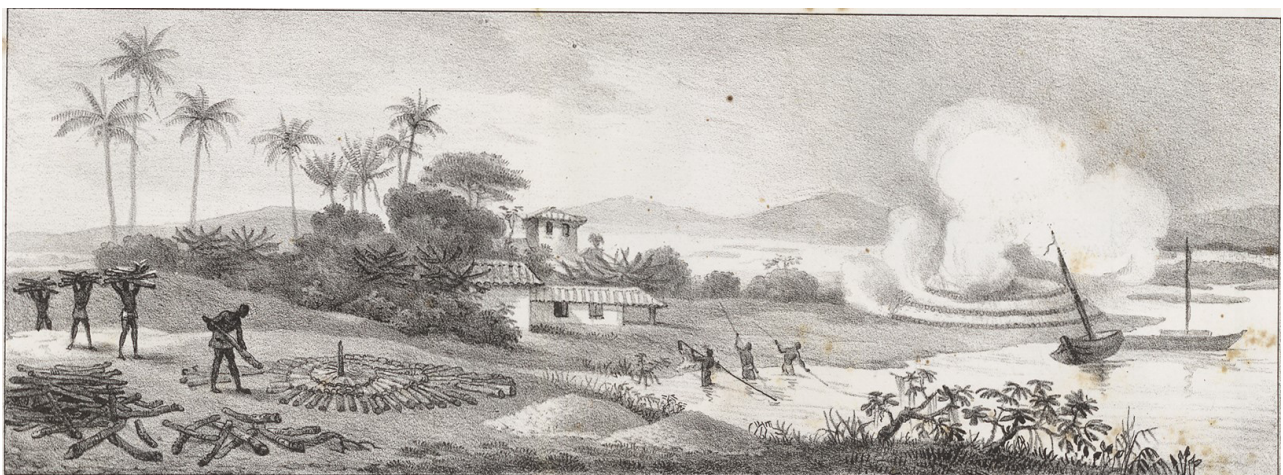


FIGURE 2: Slaves producing lime from seashells. Source: Debret, 1835.

Curiously, even if the plan was to improve social control, as suggested by Poettering, it does not seem to have been so effective since similar complaints about slave unrest continued to appear after the building of the aqueduct had already been finished.¹¹

If one of the main water-related challenges in the early history of Rio was how to bring fresh water to the urban area, the other was how to drain the water from the many lakes and swamps that punctuated the city. The lime and stone produced by slaves were also widely used here. In the early 1640s, a ditch was dug to drain the Santo Antônio lake, which was the object of recurrent complaints from the Franciscan friars from the Convent of Santo Antônio. The ditch had to be frequently cleaned and did not solve the problem, leading to a new effort a few years later with the construction of a pipe of stone and lime that went all the way to the Praia do Carmo (present-day Praça XV). The problem would only come to an end by the 1720s with land reclamation from the lake (Coaracy, 1965, pp. 109, 129). In the eighteenth century, a number of other lakes and swamps would be covered for the expansion of the urban area. These were fundamental transformations

for building the infrastructure of a city that was expanding as part of a slave-trading entrepôt. The main commercial area by then was still the same as in the seventeenth century, around the Rua Direita. This was where most great merchants (the *contratadores* and others) lived and important official buildings such as the Customs House, the Mesa do Bem Comum, the Casa dos Contos, and the many warehouses owned by those same merchants (including slave traders) were located (Cavalcanti, 2005, p. 41). In 1722, it was clear to authorities that warehouses in the port needed to be expanded, and new buildings had to be erected in order to deal with the growing circulation of goods and people in the city.¹² These goods and people included gold, leading to the construction of a mint, and enslaved Africans, leading to the establishment of a specific cemetery for them.¹³ Thus, as the population of the city expanded, so did its urban area. In the following years a number of other lakes, such as Boqueirão (Fig. 3), and swamps were also drained, now more unambiguously using the slaves of the local population, transformations that continued into the nineteenth century (Lamego, 1964, p. 172; Santos, 2020).



FIGURE 3: The Carioca Aqueduct and the Boqueirão Lagoon. Source: <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/lagoa-do-boqueir%C3%A3o-e-aqueduto-da-carioca-leandro-joquim/YwEHjaEPKOEjBA?hl=pt>

If water is an essential element of any port, another one is food. Having a reliable supply of water and food was a key part of this story and Rio de Janeiro seems to have been particularly well equipped for this. The Columbian Exchange (Crosby, 1972) played a central role here by making manioc a key staple of the slave trade as we have seen, but also by radically changing the environmental space of Rio de Janeiro after the introduction of a number of Old-World plants and animals. The captaincy in fact became notorious for having a better-developed food-producing sector than its northeastern counterparts, especially Bahia, which experienced a few subsistence crises during the colonial era. Rio de Janeiro received supplies from São Paulo and also had non-negligible rice and manioc producing sectors. There are some indications that the gold boom had some impact on food production in the captaincy since a number of people migrated to the mining zones (with the governor suggesting in 1703 that dried meat could come from Sacramento to supply the city).¹⁴ In any case, the Carioca valley witnessed the emergence of units producing cereals, vegetables, and fruits that supplied not only the inhabitants of the city but also the expanding slave-trading entrepôt (Abreu, 2010 vol. 1, p. 254). Citric fruits, for example, were an important part of supplies to treat scurvy, one of the most common diseases in the age of sail, and Rio de Janeiro seemed particularly suited for their production. According to one contemporary observer, “thorny trees such as orange, citron, and lemon trees of all kinds grow well on this land that for most of the year have fruits of all sorts and great orange trees and citron gardens, spreading across the forest and there are so many of them that no one cares” (Abreu, 1957, p. 159). In the late sixteenth century, the first supplies to a Dutch ship that arrived in Rio consisted of 50 to 60 oranges (França, 2000, pp. 25, 37; Sampaio, 2003, pp. 65-66). Such a demand for citric fruits to treat scurvy was certainly increased when the cargo of the ship was made of living commodities, as was the case in the transatlantic slave trade. While cashew trees seem to have been used in the recovery of slaves in other parts of Brazil (Rodrigues, 2005, p. 262), the wide availability of citric fruits may have played a similar role in colonial Rio. In sum, the supplying sector of Rio de Janeiro was strongly attached to the slave trade in many different ways.

The port itself needed workers for a large number of services. Communication between the ships and the land was one of them, with slaves on sloops playing an important role (although in the very early history of the port there is at least one reference of a slave swimming from a boat to the land with a letter) (França, 2000, p. 26). In the early eighteenth century, a few letters from local authorities to the Portuguese king discussed whether hiring Amerindians or purchasing enslaved Africans would be the cheapest option to be used in the sloops (*escaleres*) of the government. By the early nineteenth century, indigenous paddlers had become the main responsible for these services in the port of Rio de Janeiro. Similarly important were the dockworkers, responsible for loading and unloading vessels, including slave ships. They were particularly

important in Rio because the main area of slave disembarkation in the city, at the bottom of the Castelo Hill, only allowed for the arrival of smaller vessels. Transatlantic ships had to wait on the sea while smaller embarkations transported the goods and people to the dock (Gonçalves & Costa, 2020, p. 37). The year 1618 seems to have been decisive for this after the governor Rui Vaz Pinto (1616-1620) formally established that enslaved blacks should be used in the embarkation and disembarkation of goods in Rio, with his brother Duarte Vaz becoming the main responsible for the organization of these activities (Coaracy, 1965, p. 46). The opening of packages in the Customs was also performed by slaves, as well as a number of other port services, from cleaning to opening and closing the buildings (Cardoso & Cavalcante, 2016, p. 27).

Finally, repairing the ships that arrived in the city was certainly a crucial component for the emergence of Rio de Janeiro as a slave-trading entrepôt. When two Spanish ships arrived in Rio de Janeiro in 1618, the same governor, Rui Vaz Pinto, aided by local shipbuilding experts, argued that they could not leave without first making some essential repairs on the vessels. The captain accepted the suggestion but was shocked at the proposed time for repairing the ship offered by the local professionals (one to two months). “The following day, after mass, Captain Gonçalves de Nodal would go into the forest accompanied by two carpenters, two caulkers from the ships, two more caulkers from the land, 20 men from the crew, and *nine blacks* in order to collect the necessary timber.” Thus, even by taking the issue into his own hands, the captain still needed the services of local workers, including slaves. Figures such as André de Sousa, an enslaved African who claimed his freedom to the Portuguese king, in 1729, after having worked for more than 30 years in the transportation of timber, were essential here.¹⁵ Unfortunately, we still know very little about the Brazilian shipbuilding industry during the colonial era, especially in its connection to the slave trade, but there are some indications that many ships were built in places like the Ilha do Governador and Ilha Grande in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries using the mixed labor force of Amerindians and enslaved Africans that were at the basis of all enterprises during that period (Cabral, 2009). Salvador de Sá built a number of ships for himself at the Ilha do Governador, including the famous galleon *Padre Eterno*, considered by contemporaries to be the largest ship in the world (and the reason why the neighborhood where Rio de Janeiro’s international airport is nowadays called *Galeão*) (Alencastro, 2018, p. 192). One slave trader involved in the traffic to La Plata in the early eighteenth century was impressed with the quality of the Brazilian timber used in a ship that he purchased in Rio de Janeiro (Pereira, 2021).

In sum, building defensive structures, transforming the space to build an urban area, producing manioc and other food supplies, and transporting goods and people in the port created a demand that was fulfilled by the labor of Amerindians and a growing number of enslaved Africans. Their labor allowed for the development of the city and other productive sectors of the captaincy. At the

same time, by helping construct a slave-trading entrepôt, their labor made possible the flows of enslaved Africans to other parts of the economic spaces of silver and gold, thus contributing to the creation of the large global flows of precious metals that transformed the modern world.

RIO DE JANEIRO IN THE GLOBAL CIRCUITS OF TRADE AND THE CAPITALIST WORLD-ECONOMY

If the main function of colonial Rio de Janeiro was to provide captives to the economic spaces of mining, what were the global implications of this? The trade in slaves to these regions involved a number of other products, but the main goods coming in the opposite direction as we have seen were silver and gold. The peculiarity of precious metals is that they can circulate as commodities and as money, thus lubricating those same trade circuits that unified this entire space. Part of the scholarship has emphasized the shortage of liquidity in Portuguese America, describing the chains of indebtedness that connected merchants and producers across space and time. While these chains seem to have played an important role in the construction of Atlantic systems, they should not be seen in opposition to the circulation of money for there is growing evidence that it did circulate in significant numbers within the colonial space (Carrara, 2020).

A small part of the silver and gold passing through Rio went to Africa, especially West Africa, where it was exchanged for captives (Marques & Lopes, 2019). But most of the silver and gold that reached Rio went to Portugal and Spain, from where it went to other parts of the continent and to Asia. The main emphasis of the historiography of the last three decades has in fact been on the flows of silver into China as part of a broader critique of the eurocentrism of a previous generation of historians. This has produced some debate on the nature of the world market in the early modern period and the active role of Asia in it. In terms of the discussion developed in this chapter, the focus on Asia helps dismiss debates on the bilateral or triangular nature of the transatlantic slave trade to Brazil, since this was, in fact, a truly global process. The silver that was extracted from Potosí and passed through Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro gave access, for example, to Indian textiles, which became a key staple of the slave trade in Angola already in the late sixteenth century (Ferreira, 2003, p. 48-49). This structure, established by Iberians in the long sixteenth century, was further intensified in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with the ascension of North Atlantic powers but remained essentially the same: precious metals continued to be a fundamental part of Asian exchanges, which in turn were a key component of the transatlantic slave trade (Riello, 2013). In this sense, the silver and gold that were exchanged for slaves and flowed through Rio played an important role in the exchanges that led to the arrival of more enslaved Africans in Rio itself and the rest of the mining economic spaces of the early modern era. It also helped create the structures that would be at the basis of the ascension of a

northwest European Atlantic system over the long seventeenth century (Berbel, Marquese & Parron, 2016).

The focus of global historians on the flows of silver to Asia has nonetheless come at some conceptual and historiographical costs, especially for understanding the specific role of precious metals in the history of Europe and its broader significance in the making of the modern world. On this issue, some global historians have been skeptical: “those metals probably did little for Europe’s economic development,” Kenneth Pomeranz argues, “since they financed numerous wars, including Spain’s nearly successful assaults on the emerging core economies of northwest Europe” (Pomeranz, 2000, p. 270). However, this is a typical example of a subtle methodological nationalism that continues to inform this historiography. Silver was indeed a critical component in the financing of Spain’s theater of war but it increasingly went to Dutch hands at the turn of the century, with Amsterdam becoming the main European destination of bullion. Those precious metals played a central role in the construction of Dutch hegemony over the seventeenth century since it was critical for exchanges in the Baltic, the so-called mother trade, which provided the wood for building Dutch ships and much of the cereals that fed not only the Netherlands but also many other parts of Europe (with the Dutch profiting from the shipping of all these goods). Much of this structure was also essential for the expansion of the British Empire over the eighteenth century (Wallerstein, 2011; Moore, 2010).

Perhaps more importantly, this bullion allowed for the many financial developments of early modern Europe. Precious metals from the New World operated as the monetary stocks that allowed European states to create a unified-monetary space, with a network of banks and an elastic supply of credit money. Antwerp became one of the greatest financial centers of the sixteenth century because of the financing of war by Spain, with Genoese merchants exchanging the silver for gold and bills of exchange to pay for the Spanish armies in the Netherlands (frequently considered some form of anti-capitalist development as we have seen). Antwerpian developments in turn contributed to the ascension of Amsterdam in the long seventeenth century (Gelderblom, 2003). Similarly, the development of Amsterdam played an important role in the emergence of London (Wallerstein, 2011). These financial transformations allowed for not only the expansion of investments across the Atlantic but also the construction of fiscal-military states and the financing of war on the global stage (Marques & Marquese, 2020). This was a key difference in relation to Asia that global historians have not paid much attention to, instead emphasizing the large volume of bullion that was destined for Asia. That this bullion also lubricated trade in Asia tells only part of the story since the critical issue here was how it was used. “Monetization,” Geoffrey Ingham argues in relation to China, “that is, the fixing of a stable nominal standard (money of account) in relation to a quantity of silver was precisely what didn’t occur.” (Ingham, 2015, p. 177). China drained a large volume of silver but this silver was not used as part of a coherent monetary system that allowed for com-

parable financial transformations such as those found in seventeenth-century Amsterdam and eighteenth-century London. By flattening these differences, historians such as Pomeranz and Dennis Flynn have discarded the concept of capitalism itself as another Eurocentric invention (Pomeranz, 2009; Flynn, 2020). But it was precisely this sort of financial development that formed a key layer of capitalism as a historical system, as Fernand Braudel understood all too well (Braudel, 1987).

All too often, the history of money is told without reference to the labor of Amerindians and Africans that made it possible and it was as part of this story that Rio de Janeiro played an essential role as a slave-trading entrepôt. On the one hand, it made possible the construction of the economic spaces of silver and gold by organizing the flows of enslaved labor that were a critical part of them. On the other hand, it operated as one of the many entrepôts that made the global circulation of silver and gold possible, thus contributing to lubricating the Asian trade that has been the object of recent historiography. My main point here, however, is that we should move one step further (and, in a sense, one step back for this was the object of an older generation of historians such as Fernand Braudel and Pierre Vilar) and understand the role of Rio de Janeiro, as many other slave-trading entrepôts and slave societies of the Americas, in the development of capitalism as a historical system. Trade in the early modern era was global, precious metals were a key part of it, and Asia played an active role with their incredible demand for bullion. This same trade, however, was in the process of being radically transformed by a different thing called capitalism, a historical system that implied new forms of money and a radical reshaping of the world, as not only the sugar-producing islands and mining zones of the Americas indicated but also the slave-trading entrepôts that made them possible. The construction of colonial Rio de Janeiro—a city dedicated to organizing and redistributing an unprecedented flow of commodified individuals from another continent—was part of this process. The proto-industrial features of these societies were not there by chance; they were a foreboding of the future.

NOTES

- Decreto da [vice-rainha, duquesa de Mântua], D. Margarida de Sabóia, Dezembro, 25, 1635, Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Conselho Ultramarino, Lisboa (hereafter, AHU, CU), 017, Caixa 1, documento 66.
- Carta dos oficiais da Câmara da cidade do Rio de Janeiro ao rei [D. João IV], Janeiro, 11, 1645, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 2, Documento 134.
- All estimates and data on slave voyages come from www.slavevoyages.org, unless otherwise noted.
- Carta do provedor da Fazenda Real do Rio de Janeiro, Luís Lopes Pegado, ao rei [D. Pedro II], 13 de Fevereiro de 1704, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 8, Documento 817.
- AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 18, documento 2024, Lisboa.
- For a small sample, see the following documents at the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Conselho Ultramarino: Cartas de 6 de janeiro de 1637, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 1, Documento 69; 2 de Fevereiro de 1637, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 1, Documento 72; 31 de Outubro de 1643, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 2, Documento 113;

- 4 de Fevereiro de 1644, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 2, documento 116; 20 de Maio de 1644, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 2, documento 121; 6 de Março de 1710, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 8, Documento 871; 4 de Dezembro de 1711, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 9, Documento 946; 22 de Fevereiro de 1724, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 14, Documento 1512.
- Carta de 18 de Setembro de 1726, Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Conselho Ultramarino, 017, Caixa 17, Documento 1874; Requerimento dos padres do Mosteiro de São Bento, ao rei [D. João V], 28 de fevereiro de 1729, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 19, Documento 2141.
- Ofício do [governador do Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais e São Paulo], conde de Bobadela, [Gomes Freire de Andrade], ao [secretário de estado da Marinha e Ultramar], Tomé Joaquim da Costa Corte Real, 16 de Dezembro de 1759, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 58, Documento 5595.
- Carta dos oficiais da Câmara da cidade do Rio de Janeiro ao rei [D. Afonso VI], 8 de Julho de 1659, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 3, Documento 322.
- For a small sample of primary sources describing the difficulties related to accessing the water and the construction of the aqueduct, see Carta dos oficiais da Câmara da cidade do Rio de Janeiro ao rei [D. Afonso VI], 8 de Julho de 1659, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 3, Documento 322; Carta dos oficiais da Câmara da cidade do Rio de Janeiro ao príncipe regente [D. Pedro], 5 de Agosto de 1678, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 4, Documento 425; Carta dos oficiais da Câmara da cidade do Rio de Janeiro ao príncipe regente [D. Pedro], 21 de maio de 1681, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 5, Documento 451; Carta dos oficiais da Câmara da cidade do Rio de Janeiro ao príncipe regente [D. Pedro], 8 de julho de 1683, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 5, Documento 485; CARTA do [governador do Rio de Janeiro], Aires de Saldanha de Albuquerque, ao rei [D. João V], 8 de julho de 1719, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 10, Documento 1124.
- Carta dos oficiais da Câmara do Rio de Janeiro, ao rei [D. João V], 9 de agosto de 1727, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 18, Documento 1984; CARTA dos oficiais da Câmara [do Rio de Janeiro], ao rei [D. João V], 21 de agosto de 1728, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 19, Documento 2111.
- Carta do governador do Rio de Janeiro, Aires de Saldanha de Albuquerque, ao rei [D. João V], 16 de novembro de 1722, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 12, Documento 1372.
- Parecer do Conselho Ultramarino sobre a casa que se devia construir de novo no Rio de Janeiro para a cunhagem da moeda, 7 de setembro de 1703, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 8, Documento 805; Carta do governador do Rio de Janeiro, Aires de Saldanha de Albuquerque, ao rei [D. João V], 21 de Novembro de 1722, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 12, Documento 1391; Carta do [provedor da Fazenda do Rio de Janeiro], Bartolomeu de Sequeira Cordovil, ao rei [D. João V], 22 de Junho de 1726, AHU, CU, 017, Caixa 16, Documento 1787.
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