The Great Fear of 1852: Riots against Enslavement in the Brazilian Empire

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1 Introduction

Recent studies on the history of slavery have often started off from the concept of Second Slavery, that is, the transformation of Atlantic slavery as part of the expansion of capitalism during the first decades of the nineteenth century, which resulted in “the opening of new zones of slave commodity production—most prominently the U.S. cotton zone, the Cuban sugar zone, and the Brazilian coffee zone—and the decline of older zones of slave production” (French and British Caribbean).¹ There are several merits to the concept of Second Slavery, but I mention just two of them that are of special significance for this text.

First, it draws attention to the fact that the first half of the nineteenth century did not involve the weakening of slavery in the Americas at all. Actually, there was a partial relocation of it; a persistence of slaveholding economies and societies that brings into sharp relief the indeterminacy of the historical process of slave emancipation. The concept of Second Slavery made it impossible to conceive the nineteenth century as the time of a linear transition from slavery to freedom, or from unfree to free forms of labor regimes. Second, it has made historians more aware of the interconnectedness and interdependence of the worlds of free and unfree labor. These two characteristics of the concept of Second Slavery seem to encapsulate an approach to labor history in capitalist societies that has been articulated by Marcel van der Linden in several of his works. According to him, the boundaries between free and unfree labor in capitalist societies tend to be “rather finely graded or vague”;

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1 Dale W. Tomich, “Introduction,” in *The Politics of Second Slavery*, ed. Dale W. Tomich (Albany, 2016).

in reality, “there are extensive and complicated ‘grey areas’ replete with transitional locations between the ‘free’ wage laborers and the slaves, the self-employed and the lumpenproletarians.” Van der Linden proceeds to say that these “variegated” groups of “subaltern workers,” who often gravitate between free and unfree worlds of labor, are the “multitude” that “labor historians should try to understand.”²

In the case of Brazilian and U.S. slave societies, the experience of freed and free people of African descent seemed to be shaped, to a great extent, by the mere fact of the continuation of slavery. In both countries in the 1850s, free and freed people of African descent experienced an acute sense of precariousness, through being made aware of the vulnerability of their freedom. In the U.S., demand for labor in cotton production caused a huge increase in the number of slaves sold from the Upper South (Virginia, Maryland) to the Deep South (Mississippi, Louisiana). This intensification of the internal slave trade brought “unfathomable suffering” to the enslaved population (50 percent of slave sales in the antebellum period caused the separation of families),³ concentrated slave property in the hands of fewer whites, increased the number of slaves in some areas, and heightened a feeling of insecurity among the white population. One of the consequences was a hardening of whites’ attitudes toward free and freed blacks. In addition to measures to make manumission virtually impossible, southern whites made plans for the deportation of free blacks, for their re-enslavement, and for resuming the slave trade.⁴

In Brazil, the 1850s saw the end of the African slave trade, which had continued as contraband for almost twenty years after a law that had formally prohibited it in November 1831. As a result, there was a huge increase in the internal slave trade from the northern to the southern provinces of the Brazilian Empire in order to meet the demand for labor in coffee production. During the years of the contraband African trade, illegal enslavement had become routine; actively condoned by politicians and public authorities. With the ending of the African trade and the surge in the internal trade, free and freed people of African descent felt threatened, and seemed to have reason to suspect that the government might be plotting their re-enslavement. Accordingly, free and

2 Marcel van der Linden, *Workers of the World: Essays toward a Global Labor History* (Leiden and Boston, 2008), 32; see also Tom Brass and Marcel van der Linden, eds., *Free and Unfree Labour: The Debate Continues* (Bern, 1997) and Carolyn Brown and Marcel van der Linden, “Shifting Boundaries between Free and Unfree Labor: Introduction,” *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 78 (2010): pp. 4–11.

3 Walter Johnson, *River of Dark Dreams: Slavery and Empire in the Cotton Kingdom* (Cambridge, 2013), 14.

4 Ira Berlin, *Slaves Without Masters: The Free Negro in the Antebellum South* (Oxford, 1974), Ch. 11.

freed blacks offered their perceptions of the period of Second Slavery, and told a history of it from the bottom up: As we will see, they articulated a political view of their situation, which showed an understanding of the connection between the national and the international contexts. They believed that their freedom was at risk, and decided to struggle to uphold it.

2 The Riots

On 1 January 1852, a bill enacted by the Brazilian government on 18 June the previous year was to come into effect, establishing the mandatory civil registration of births and deaths. Another bill enacted on the same day scheduled a general population census to take place in June and July 1852. With the two decrees, the government intended to solve the problem of the lack of information about the country's population, deemed to be a major obstacle to devising public policies.⁵

Justices of the peace were to become responsible for the registries of births and deaths. Entries for newborns who were free needed to include the date, time, and place of birth, the name and sex of the child, and the names of both parents in the case of legitimate children, or just the mother's otherwise. With regard to slave children, almost all the requirements were the same, except for the need to write down the name of the master and the color of the newborn. If freedom was granted upon birth, a proper annotation needed to be made to that effect. The law required that priests demand a birth certificate in order to perform the baptism of any child. In respect of death certificates, they needed to contain a wealth of information: Name of the deceased, date and place of death, age, marital status, place of birth, profession, address, names of parents and spouse, cause of death (citing disease if applicable), as well as whether a last will and testament existed. However controversial the requirement that priests asked for a birth certificate in order to perform baptisms, it seems that people were also worried about and angry at the necessity of presenting a death certificate to bury their dead in cemeteries or churchyards.

Instead of the law coming into effect, what happened in January 1852 was a "calamity," according to public authorities that reported on the events in the following months: Police chiefs, justices of the peace, judges, military officers,

5 Decree no. 797, 18 June 1851, "Manda executar o Regulamento para a organização do Censo geral do Império"; decree no. 798, 18 June 1851, "Manda executar o Regulamento do registro dos nascimentos e óbitos," in *Collecção das Leis do Imperio do Brasil*, tome 14, Part 2, Section 3, 161–173.

priests, provincial presidents, and government ministers.⁶ The “people” rose up in riots that spread through several of the northern provinces of the Empire. There followed a state of unrest and apprehension throughout the country,

6 My account is based on the following printed sources: *Relatório apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na quarta sessão da oitava legislatura pelo ministro e secretário D'Estado dos Negócios da Justiça Eusébio de Queiróz Coitinho Mattoso Camara* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1852); *Relatório apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na quarta sessão da oitava legislatura pelo ministro e secretário d'Estado dos Negócios do Império Visconde de Mont'alegre* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1852); *Relatório apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na primeira sessão da nona legislatura pelo ministro e secretário d'Estado dos Negócios do Império Francisco Gonçalves Martins* (Rio de Janeiro: Typographia Nacional, 1853); *Relatorio que à Assembléa Legislativa Provincial de Pernambuco apresentou na sessão ordinaria do 1. de março de 1852 o excellentissimo presidente da mesma provincia, o dr. Victor de Oliveira* (Pernambuco: Typ. de M.F. de Faria, 1852); *Relatorio apresentado à Assembléa Legislativa Provincial da Parahyba do Norte pelo excellentissimo presidente da provincia, o dr. Antonio Coelho de Sá e Albuquerque em 3 de maio de 1852* (Parahyba: Typ. de José Rodrigues da Costa, 1852); *Falla dirigida à Assembléa Legislativa da provincia das Alagoas, na abertura da primeira sessão ordinaria da nona legislatura, pelo exm. presidente da mesma provincia, o conselheiro José Bento da Cunha e Figueiredo em 26 de abril de 1852* (Maceió: Typ. Constitucional, 1852); *Relatorio apresentado à Assembléa Legislativa Provincial de Sergipe na abertura de sua sessão ordinaria no dia 8 de março de 1852 pelo exm. snr. presidente da provincia, dr. José Antonio de Oliveira Silva* (Sergipe: Typ. Provincial, 1852); *Relatorio do excellentissimo senhor doutor Joaquim Marcos d'Almeida Rego, presidente da provincia do Ceará, à respectiva Assembléa Legislativa na abertura da 1.a sessão ordinaria de sua 9.a legislatura, em o 1.o de setembro de 1852* (Ceará: Typ. Cearense, n.d.); *Relatorio que à Assembléa Provincial da provincia de Minas Geraes apresentou na sessão ordinaria de 1852, o doutor Luiz Antonio Barboza, presidente da mesma provincia* (Ouro Preto: Typ. do Bom Senso, 1852). In addition, in the following manuscript sources, consulted in the National Archive, Rio de Janeiro (thereafter ANRJ), which consist basically of correspondence between the Ministry of Justice and the presidency of several provinces of the Empire: IJ1-360, Alagoas, ofícios dos presidentes, 1851–2; IJ1-698, Alagoas, ofícios dos presidentes ao ministério da Justiça, 1852–5; IJ1-265, Ceará, ofícios dos presidentes, 1852–3; IJ1-721, Ceará, ofícios dos presidentes ao ministro da Justiça, 1850–5; IJ1-618, Minas Gerais, ofícios dos presidentes, 1851–2; IJ1-771, Minas Gerais, ofícios dos presidentes ao ministério da Justiça, 1850–3; IJ1-303, Paraíba, ofícios dos presidentes, 1851–2; IJ1-304, Paraíba, ofícios dos presidentes, 1853–4; IJ1-798, Paraíba, ofícios dos presidentes ao ministro da Justiça, 1850–6; IJ1-325, Pernambuco, ofícios dos presidentes, 1851–2; IJ1-326, Pernambuco, ofícios dos presidentes, 1853–4; IJ1-824, Pernambuco, ofícios dos presidentes ao ministro da Justiça, 1850–3. I refer to the aforementioned sources in abbreviated form in the notes that follow. See also: Guillermo Palacios y Olivares, “Revoltas camponesas no Brasil escravista: a ‘Guerra dos Maribondos’ (Pernambuco, 1851–1852),” *Almanack Braziliense* 3 (2006): 9–39; Mara Loveman, “Blinded Like a State: The Revolt Against Civil Registration in Nineteenth-Century Brazil,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49 (2007): 5–39; Maria Luiza Ferreira de Oliveira, “Resistência popular contra o decreto 798 ou a ‘lei do cativo’”: Pernambuco, Paraíba, Alagoas, Sergipe, Ceará, 1851–1852,” in *Revoltas, Motins, Revoluções: Homens Livres Pobres e Libertos no Brasil do Século XIX*, ed. Monica Duarte Dantas (São Paulo, 2011). I have related these events before in *A Força da Escravidão: Ilegalidade e Costume no Brasil Oitocentista* (São Paulo, 2012), Ch. 1.

leading the Imperial government to move quickly and, on 29 January, suspend the application of both the decree on mandatory civil registration and the one concerning the national census.

The “people” acted deliberately to prevent the law from coming into effect. According to the customs of the time, priests announced new laws to their parishioners at Sunday mass. Thus, rioters watched nearby roads to keep official correspondence from reaching clerics and the local authorities in villages and towns. Furthermore, armed men and women invaded churches during mass to threaten priests and stop them from reading the decree. The mobs persecuted and attacked justices of the peace and notarial officers because they were in charge of preparing birth and death certificates. Several stories appeared about protesters who deprived police officers of their weapons and locked them up in jail. Rioters hiding in the woods would suddenly gather by the hundreds to run through the main streets of villages and towns, sometimes on their way to attack the rural properties belonging to local *grandees*.

These raids went on for a couple of weeks in January, an itinerant and intermittent pattern of skirmishes; from one village to another, from one province to the next. A rebellion on the move, decentralized, and composed of protesters with no formal leadership, but incredibly determined to resist the mandatory registration of births and deaths. Provincial governments deployed heavily-armed military and police units, called on the National Guard for emergency service, and resorted to missionaries. The latter went to meet the “turbulent crowds,” preached to them, prayed, talked a lot, and often managed to appease rioters, therefore preventing the military from slaughtering scores of demonstrators. After a month, it seemed difficult to account for the numbers of dead and wounded, although the figures reported by authorities appear suspiciously low. A dozen people had been killed in the province of Pernambuco, and fewer in Paraíba and Alagoas, with some authorities and military among them. However, the authorities alleged that it had become difficult to distinguish between victims directly linked to the riots, from others deemed to be associated with private conflicts and crimes that increased as a consequence of the breakdown of public order. Certainly, official reports carry plenty of stories of police and justices on the run, threatened by protesters.

Once the decrees had been suspended and the people had calmed down, the authorities sought to understand what had happened. The minister of justice attempted to relate the events to the rivalries between the two political parties, the Conservatives and the Liberals. Nonetheless, it proved difficult to attribute any major influence over the “seditious” crowds to the liberal opposition, because the riots sprang up here and there, without leaders who could be identified beyond the space and duration of particular episodes. Furthermore,

according to the minister himself, these were “rustic” folk, most of them poor peasants, “plus a carpenter, a cooper.”⁷ Although the minister admitted that there were practical difficulties in the application of the law on civil registration, he did so in a cursory manner, asserting that the complaints remained restricted to “the inhabitants of distant villages.” However, several skirmishes had taken place in the rural belt around Recife, the capital of Pernambuco, including some of its parishes. For the minister of justice and his ilk to consider the popular uprising as comprising people coming from the backwoods was a way of disdaining its importance. According to his reasoning, these people were “ignorant,” thus prone to manipulation by “agents of propaganda and anarchy,” by which he meant the Liberal opposition. The minister referred to the riotous lot in colorful language: They were “less enlightened people,” “deceived folk,” possessed by “fatal and absurd hallucinations,” “foolish crowds,” and “swarms of men and women in arms” who did not know what they wanted to achieve.⁸ Nevertheless, in an apparent contradiction, he concluded his narration of events in the several provinces by remarking that the rebels had “similar goals” everywhere, and presented “the same motives” for their actions. With regard to their “goals,” these seemed clearly aimed at thwarting the application of the law that required the registration of births and deaths. In addition, the protesters did not want to submit to the enrollment of family and household members in a national population census. However, the other questions remain: What were their shared motives? What experiences did these people have in common—beyond the “ignorance” attributed to them—that justified their widespread animosity towards government initiatives regarding the registration and gathering of information about the population?

The minister of the interior, perhaps because his office was charged with the obligation of attending to the practical matters associated with the application of the law, described in more detail the difficulties pertaining to mandatory civil registration.⁹ He said that the initiative suffered from its own novelty, from the isolation caused by the lack of roads and proper means of communication, in addition to the “eccentric” modes of living prevailing among the population of the interior. During the second semester of 1851, the Imperial government had been receiving information from provincial authorities that anticipated problems regarding the application of the civil registry law. The Conservative

7 *Relatório apresentado ... pelo ministro e secretário D'Estado dos Negócios da Justiça Eusébio de Queiróz Coitinho Mattoso Camara*, 1852, 3.

8 *Relatório apresentado ... pelo ministro e secretário D'Estado dos Negócios da Justiça Eusébio de Queiróz Coitinho Mattoso Camara*, 1852, 4–5.

9 *Relatório apresentado ... pelo ministro e secretário d'Estado dos Negócios do Império Visconde de Mont'alegre*, 1852, 16–18.

cabinet considered such warnings exaggerated at first, although it did take the precaution of analyzing the complaints to study possible changes in the law. A visit paid to the ministry by the bishops of the provinces of Mato Grosso and Pernambuco, both alarmed by the strong opposition to the law among their flock, convinced the government that changes had to be made.

While the Council of State studied the issue of proposing amendments to the law, news arrived of the “extraordinary events taking place in the province of Pernambuco and four others, three of them its neighbors,” forcing the government to take immediate action. Resistance to civil registration meant “threats” to the authorities, “criminal acts,” and gatherings of people brandishing arms, therefore making it necessary for the rioters to be repressed and dispersed. On reading the correspondence sent to the ministry in January 1852, the minister of interior learned that the cause of the disturbances had been “the rumor, artfully spread, and crazily believed by the ignorant people, that civil registration was a means to enslave the colored folk.” The minister did not give much credence to the hypothesis that members of the Liberal Party might have infiltrated the ranks of the rebels to instill such allegedly crazy ideas in their minds. Instead, he elaborated on the point that protesters indeed believed the purpose of the law was to reduce the free people of African descent to slavery: They even called it “the law of slavery.”

Therefore, there seems to have been a shared understanding that motivated the actions of thousands of individuals, spread over a vast area of the Brazilian Empire, who went on rioting against the law on civil registration: Free people of color were afraid of being forced into slavery and freed persons were scared of returning to it. Regardless of the fact that ministerial reports displayed the usual class hatred that made state officials oblivious to the reasoning of ordinary, poor folk, they revealed clearly the goal of the crowds (to prevent the application of the law on civil registration), their strategy (to prevent priests publicizing the law from the pulpit and justices of the peace from applying its dispositions), and their motive (to resist illegal enslavement).

With regard to the fear of enslavement, the protesters believed that a connection existed between civil registration and the end of the African slave trade, which had been achieved shortly beforehand as a consequence of the application of the law of 4 September 1850. Perhaps the rioters thought the cessation of the African trade was merely the result of British pressure, which would have made them more insecure in respect of the intentions of the Imperial government to obtain labor for coffee cultivation. On 6 January 1852, a judge from the province of Pernambuco wrote to the provincial president to say that “the reason why the people are so restless and threatening is that it is said generally that the dispositions of the Decree are designed to enslave their

children, since the British no longer permit the coming of Africans.”¹⁰ In fact, it seems that the rebels saw a relationship between the end of the African slave trade and the two decrees regarding civil registration and the census: Birth certificates had been envisaged as reducing future generations to slavery, and the enrollment associated with the national census would make it possible to organize the enslavement of free and freed adult persons of color.¹¹

The president of the province of Paraíba, after an introduction in the customary style of these official reports, made his point objectively: “The idea that the enslavement of men of color was the purpose of civil registration became widespread, and to some weak minds it gave rise to a sort of fanaticism.”¹² This was in print. In his confidential exchanges with the minister of justice, to which he appended a wealth of correspondence received from other provincial authorities—such as the police chief and the judge of the first district—the president of Paraíba offered chilling accounts of what the rebels had been saying and doing. On 7 February 1852, the president wrote to the minister to relate that in the villages of Campina Grande and Ingá, according to the judge who had visited those places, the people, carrying weapons, insisted “that authorities gave them the Book, which they called the Book of slavery, as well as the boxes with ropes and ferules, and made other wild demands.”¹³

Despite the repeated acknowledgement by authorities from the top to the bottom of the Brazilian governmental hierarchy that poor people of African descent resorted to riots in 1852 because they thought that they would be enslaved or re-enslaved, official documents reveal a deafening silence regarding what made so many people share the experience of such fear. In order to understand the great fear of 1852, the confluence of two historical processes must be approached: That is, the practices within Brazilian slavery that rendered insecure the freedom of free and freed people of color, and the political and social aspects that created a kind of interdiction concerning the representation of that very situation.

10 Cited in Guillermo Palacios y Olivares, “Revoltas camponesas no Brasil escravista,” 22.

11 The president of the province of Minas Gerais clarified this point: “the wickedness of some men, which made them abuse the ignorance of the inhabitants of some villages in the interior of Pernambuco, persuaded the population that the enrollment of citizens and the registration of births had the purpose of enslaving the parents and the children [respectively]”; *Relatorio ... da provincia de Minas Geraes*, 1852, 4.

12 *Relatorio ... da Parahyba do Norte*, 1852, 3.

13 Maço II-798, ANRJ. The citations that follow refer to this.

3 The Practice of Illegal Enslavement

In 1826, in exchange for British diplomatic support for the recognition of Brazilian independence (obtained in 1822), the Brazilian government agreed to sign a treaty promising to end the African slave trade within three years of the treaty's ratification.¹⁴ As a consequence, the slave trade became illegal beginning in March 1830. Moreover, on 7 November 1831, the Brazilian parliament passed a law prohibiting it. In spite of the legal ban, and after a temporary decrease in the first half of the 1830s, the slave trade—now contraband—resumed. It peaked in the following years, furthered by labor demand in the coffee plantations, counting on the corruption of public officials and the support of ample sectors of the population to elude British efforts to curb it. By the early 1850s, when changed political and social conditions brought about the enactment of a new law and the effective cessation of the slave trade, more than 750,000 Africans had been smuggled into the country, thus comprising the great majority of the labor force in Brazilian plantations in the provinces of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Minas Gerais.¹⁵ It follows that the wealth and power of coffee planters, the major symbol of the alleged economic prosperity and political stability of the Brazilian Empire, originated in the acquisition of slave labor illegally, by means of the contraband African trade.

Given the obvious fact, recognized by government authorities and planters, that slave property originating from the importation of Africans was illegal after the law of 1831, it remains to be seen how it became possible to shape institutions, conduct everyday business transactions pertaining to a slave society, and maintain slave discipline under these circumstances.

It appears that the seigneurial class considered access to slave labor a customary right, to be guaranteed by the government especially at an economic juncture in which coffee expanded throughout the southeastern provinces and conquered international markets.¹⁶ Furthermore, the contraband trade may have benefited from the fact that the institution of slavery enjoyed wide social backing during the first half of the nineteenth century; that is, access to slave property was not restricted to the wealthy, as people of relatively

14 The traditional accounts of the story summarized in this paragraph are: Leslie Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade: Britain, Brazil and the Slave Trade Question, 1807–1869* (Cambridge, 1970); Robert Edgar Conrad, *World of Sorrow: The African Slave Trade to Brazil* (Baton Rouge/London, 1986).

15 For this estimate, see www.slavevoyages.org (24 May 2017).

16 Beatriz Galotti Mamigonian, “O direito de ser africano livre: os escravos e as interpretações da lei de 1831,” in *Direitos e Justiça no Brasil. Ensaios de História Social*, eds. Silvia H. Lara and Joseli M.N. Mendonça (Campinas, 2006), 129–160.

modest means—freed people among them—often had one or two slaves of their own. In order to carry on with their activities, slave traders depended on a vast network of partners and services, ranging from inhabitants of distant coastal areas willing to support the clandestine landing of Africans—therefore feeding, healing, and hiding them until they could proceed to their final destination—to conniving local authorities and planters determined to acquire African labor irrespective of the law. However, there were risks involved in every step of such undertakings. The British government demanded compliance with international treaties and sought to repress the contraband trade. Furthermore, it maintained that the right to freedom pertained not only to Africans actually apprehended on board captured slave ships, but to all those already successfully smuggled into the country, whose situation should be investigated and addressed by the Imperial government.

The high rate of illegal enslavement that occurred after 1831 affected the daily experience of freedom for people of African descent in general, as it caused insecurity and rendered freedom precarious. The connection between illegal enslavement and the precariousness of freedom is crucial, both to understand the logic permeating public policies and to observe the strategies used by blacks and *pardos* (mixed-race people)—slaves, free, and freed—in dealing with it.¹⁷ Slave owners' interests in not abiding by the law of 1831 necessarily meant increasing slackness in property requirements thereafter. For example, in the early 1830s, when attempts to curb the illegal trade were still in place, police authorities in the city of Rio realized that they needed to prevent the transportation of Africans to where they were in demand: To the interior of the provinces of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Minas Gerais. However, the alleged owners of the slaves to be transported were not required by law to present documents of the transaction that brought them into possession of the enslaved people in the first place.¹⁸ The absence of this requirement is significant, since it alone made it relatively easy to claim ownership of recently-arrived Africans, who after 1831 could no longer be introduced through the *alfândega* (customs), with the ensuing certificates and receipts associated with the collection of due taxes. With government revenue from slave property on the wane, laxity regarding primary documentation of ownership became commonplace, with

17 Sidney Chalhou, "Illegal Enslavement and the Precariousness of Freedom in Nineteenth-Century Brazil," in *Assumed Identities: The Meanings of Race in the Atlantic World*, eds. John D. Garrigus and Christopher Morris (College Station, 2010), 88–115.

18 Secretaria de Polícia da Corte, *Ofícios com Anexos (1831–1832)*, maço IJ6-165, ANRJ. In the rest of this paragraph and in the subsequent one, I summarize arguments previously made in Sidney Chalhou, "The Precariousness of Freedom in a Slave Society (Brazil in the Nineteenth Century)," *International Review of Social History* 56 (2011): 425–426.

authorities in Rio and elsewhere eager to have proprietors pay taxes on their slaves.¹⁹ Hence, a law enacted on 11 April 1842, establishing rules for slave registration and for the payment of annual and sale taxes on slave property, reassured owners, stating that “On the occasion of the first registration, nobody can be required to present the title through which [he or she] came to the possession of a slave.”²⁰

Rules and procedures making it possible not to “see” illegally enslaved Africans and giving the appearance of legality to property originating in contraband had two consequences. First, it encouraged slave stealing, an activity that seems to have acquired epidemic proportions in the 1830s and 1840s, judging from the amount of time and effort the police dedicated to preventing it during this period. Slave stealing necessarily involved establishing networks with the participation of a variety of individuals, beginning with the captives themselves. They often agreed—and sometimes asked—to be taken away, therefore turning the slackness regarding proof of slave ownership to their own advantage, by negotiating better conditions for themselves within slavery. The second consequence of the looseness concerning proof of slave property was that illegal enslavement became a greater threat to free and freed people of color in general; both African and Brazilian born. Although it is not possible to know the frequency of such events, they are mentioned in police correspondence, prison books, and trial records frequently enough to suggest that potential victims had to deal with this, calculating their moves and remaining vigilant.

As noted, the rioters of 1852—identified as free blacks and *pardos*—related the cessation of the illegal importation and enslavement of Africans to their supposition that the Brazilian government intended to enslave them as a substitute labor force thereafter, presumably for southeastern coffee plantations. A question follows from this—an intriguing one at least from the point of view of a social historian—which is, what did the Africans who arrived after 1831 and their descendants, also held in illegal bondage, know about their situation

19 Wilma Peres Costa, “Estratégias ladinas: o imposto sobre o comércio de escravos e a ‘legalização’ do tráfico (1831–1850),” *Novos Estudos CEBRAP* 67 (2003): 57–75.

20 *Collecção das leis do Imperio do Brasil*, decree no. 151, 11 April 1842, article 6: “No acto da primeira matricula a ninguem se exigirá o titulo porque possui o escravo.” As late as June 1869, deputies resisted the approval of a bill that proposed the creation of national slave registration, despite the fact that the deputy who presented it argued that proprietors would not be required “to exhibit the titles under which they possess their slaves.” He added that fiscal authorities would not have the right to raise questions concerning the list of slaves presented by each owner: That is, they should take their word for it; *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro. Camara dos Srs. Deputados*, 1869, tome 2, 192.

vis-à-vis the laws of the country? Further, what did they do, if anything, with whatever knowledge they had gained?

There is a glimpse of what government authorities believed slaves knew about their legal situation in a formal response offered by the council of state, to a complaint sent to the Imperial government by the São Paulo Provincial Assembly in October 1854.²¹ Assuming overtly the role of representatives of the coffee planters in the province, the deputies argued that slave crimes against masters, their families, and overseers had been growing lately because captives had acquired a sense of impunity for such deeds. According to the deputies from São Paulo, the problem was the non-application of the death penalty against slaves condemned according to the law of 10 June 1835. This law, enacted after two major slave insurrections in the provinces of Minas Gerais and Bahia, provided special dispositions intended to send slaves who had attacked masters, their families, and overseers to a certain and speedy death by hanging, in public ceremonies designed to dissuade others from engaging in similar acts of violence. However, by the late 1840s the Imperial government seemed to have reached the conclusion that the law of 1835 had become ineffective in deterring slave violence against masters. Furthermore, it had caused repeated judicial errors because it did not give defendants the right to appeal a sentence, as the law was inspired by the notion of swift, exemplary punishment. Hence, beginning in the late 1840s, the emperor used the powers granted to him by the Brazilian Constitution of 1824 to impede the application of capital punishment against the majority of slaves condemned according to the law of 1835, sending them instead into forced labor in shackles for life. The deputies from São Paulo thought that it did not make sense to condemn slaves to forced labor. They contended that slaves preferred to serve a sentence of that kind to toiling in coffee cultivation; thus they committed horrendous crimes and deliberately turned themselves in to public authorities, unafraid of the punishment to come.

The Council of State replied to the deputies from São Paulo with a mixture of condescending irony and lessons regarding how to maintain slave discipline. They found the argument specious that there were captives who preferred to serve sentences of forced labor for life in state prisons than to remain slaves on coffee plantations. If this were indeed the case, it meant that planters had

21 José Prospero Jehovah da Silva Carotá, *Imperiais resoluções tomadas sobre consultas da seção de Justiça do Conselho de Estado. Desde o anno de 1842, em que começou a funcionar o mesmo Conselho, até hoje*, ed. B.L. Garnier Livreiro (Rio de Janeiro, 1884), Part I, 507–509. For a detailed analysis of this document, see Sidney Chalhoub, *A Força da Escravidão*, 144–152.

not been giving slaves appropriate treatment and had neglected their religious instruction. Moreover, slaves were not endowed with “a ferocious perversity,” as the deputies alleged, but became that way as a result of excessive physical punishment. Considering the bad treatment suggested by the deputies themselves, and aware of “notions of freedom” that they heard about from those among them who were able to read newspapers, had the slaves been really “ferocious,” they would have already attempted in Brazil something similar to what had taken place in Haiti. Further elaborating on this point about what the slaves knew, the councilors argued that the rigorous application of capital punishment against the slaves would have led them to desperation. The problem of the politics of domination under Brazilian slavery had to be approached within the context of “the thousands of blacks that were annually imported to the country irrespective of the law that forbade such abominable trade. It is not possible that the slaves did not come to perceive the illegality of their bondage.”²² After all, many of them had inevitably witnessed the clandestine arrival of slave ships, had seen occasional apprehensions of recently-arrived Africans subsequently declared free, and had heard the revelations of their “false protectors” and fellow captives who knew better. In sum, “everything has been concurring for them to come to learn of their situation”; therefore, it did not make sense to worsen matters by using excessive force against enslaved people.

The councilors may have reacted against the *paulistas* (people from the province of São Paulo), perhaps irritated by the complaint from the main beneficiaries of a monarchical regime that had condoned the contraband slave trade for two decades and continued to guarantee the slave property thus acquired. Possibly therefore, it was an exaggeration to suggest that slaves in general were aware of the widespread illegality pertaining to the institution of slavery at that time. In fact, if they knew of their right to freedom, why did they not demand such right in the courts? Or did they?

Certainly, in addition to the occasions of slave ships caught in the process of disembarking scores of Africans ashore in some more or less hidden locations, there were relatively frequent cases of recently-arrived Africans captured on land. This was sometimes as a consequence of their running away from slavers, thus getting lost on the streets of Rio, for example, until taken to a police station or to some public authority, such as a police official or a neighborhood inspector. Police authorities might find several reasons to believe that an individual African was a recent arrival: For instance, they knew that a clandestine

22 José Prospero Jehovah da Silva Carootá, *Imperiais resoluções tomadas sobre consultas da seção de Justiça do Conselho de Estado*, Part 1, p. 508.

disembarkation had just happened, the African did not speak or understand any Portuguese, had skin diseases and other illnesses associated with crossing the Atlantic in dire conditions, and so on. The police would then send the African to a municipal judge, who would interrogate him or her with the help of an interpreter of the same ethnic origin, if possible, to reach a decision about his or her legal status. If the conclusion was that the person had been introduced by contraband, he or she would be declared an *africano livre* (liberated African), which meant that—now under the authority of the Brazilian government—they would be sent to public works or rented out to private citizens.²³ Liberated Africans had to serve fourteen years before becoming able to apply for full emancipation. Their number at the time is estimated at approximately 11,000 individuals, a sharp contrast with the 750,000 reduced to slavery during the years of the contraband trade. Their lot was often compared with and taken to be similar to that of people in bondage;²⁴ as a consequence, it may have made more sense, to many Africans, to reckon with bondage and seek manumission, instead of staging an uphill legal battle to become a liberated African.

The usual story, in any case, was that hundreds of thousands of Africans introduced through the illegal trade remained slaves, and became invisible, so to speak. As a British diplomat once observed, “These illegal slaves are at every moment and everywhere in presence of the Brazilian authorities, but are not seen.”²⁵ Africans—and certainly also *crioulos* (Brazilian-born blacks)—who came to the attention of authorities were presumed slaves unless otherwise proven. Africans who spoke and understood a little Portuguese and who did not show clear signs of having recently experienced crossing the Atlantic on a slave ship, were considered *ladinos*, that is, taken to have been introduced a long time ago, or at least at a time in the past impossible to determine, therefore taken to be earlier than the law of 7 November 1831. Police authorities and the judicial system tended to dismiss outright allegations of a right to freedom originated in a supposedly illegal importation that occurred after the law of 1831.

23 This summary of what happened in the case of individual Africans seized on the streets of Rio and suspected of having been recently introduced to the country by contraband is based on the systematic reading of police correspondence and jail papers pertaining to the 1830s and 1840s, especially the following series: IJ6, Secretaria de Polícia da Corte. Ofícios com anexos; IIIJ7, Registro de ofícios relativos ao Calabouço; IJ7, Casa de Correção da Corte. Ofícios com anexos; all in the collection of the ANRJ.

24 Charles Pradez, *Nouvelles études sur le Brésil* (Paris, 1872), 133–136. For an official estimate of the number of *africanos livres* (10,719): *Relatorio do Ministerio da Justiça apresentado à Assembléa Geral Legislativa na segunda sessão da decima terceira legislatura, 1868*, Minister Martim Francisco Ribeiro de Andrada, 16.

25 W.D. Christie, *Notes on Brazilian Questions* (London/Cambridge, 1865), 82.

Moreover, there needed to appear a clear link between a given African claiming freedom and a determined clandestine disembarkation. This constituted a legal trap since, as a rule, a clandestine disembarkation was one that did not receive the proper recognition and formal procedures pertaining to police, fiscal, and judicial authorities.

In 1854, in the interior of the province of São Paulo, a runaway slave called Bento was caught and taken to a local judge. Someone appeared soon afterwards, claiming to be his owner. The judge, however, for unknown reasons, thought that the captured African might have been smuggled into the country, and therefore investigated the situation, interrogated witnesses, and concluded that Bento had a formal right to freedom and should be declared a liberated African. Alarmed, the police chief and the provincial president wrote to the minister of justice to seek guidance regarding what to do in this situation. In a confidential, carefully-worded reply, Minister Nabuco de Araújo, a prominent politician, lawyer, and a towering statesman of the Brazilian Empire, praised the concern of provincial authorities and explained to them that, on the one hand, it did not seem appropriate for the judge to reach a conclusion against the law. On the other hand, in practice and for the security of the best interests of Brazilian society, the Imperial government had established a proscription of the application of the law of 1831. The minister proceeded to say that “the empire of circumstances requires that something be done, directly or at least indirectly, to defend the collective interests of society.” In other words, the minister ordered the provincial authorities to do something to silence the overzealous local judge.²⁶

4 From the African Slave Trade to the Internal Slave Trade

In September 1850, the Brazilian parliament approved a new law to abolish the African slave trade, in a changed context that suggested the government's determination to apply its dispositions. In 1848, a slave conspiracy in the coffee-producing Paraíba Valley scared planters and authorities, who were at the time acutely aware of the growing demographic imbalance brought about by the huge number of enslaved Africans arriving in the country in the late 1840s (it was common that more than 80 percent of slaves in coffee plantations at the

26 Joaquim Nabuco, *Um Estadista do Império. Nabuco de Araújo, sua Vida, suas Opiniões, sua Época*, ed. H. Garnier Livreiro, 2 vols. (Rio de Janeiro/Paris, 1897), vol 1, 242–243.

time were Africans).²⁷ In the summer of 1849–1850, a severe yellow fever outbreak in several coastal cities of the country, including Rio de Janeiro and Salvador, was thought to have originated in ships linked to the African slave trade. Since the epidemic was particularly devastating to European immigrants and whites in general, affecting blacks only marginally, it increased white people's feelings of insecurity with regard to the large African presence in the country.²⁸ Last but not least, in the first months of 1850 the British campaign against the African slave trade turned to seizing and destroying Brazilian ships, deemed to be linked with the contraband trade, found in national territorial waters and even anchored in ports. In July 1850, it was clear that the situation had become untenable and that the Brazilian government would finally move firmly towards ending the contraband slave trade.²⁹

Ministerial and provincial reports and correspondence pertaining to 1851—thus in the months immediately preceding the riots of January 1852—leave no doubt about the intensity of government efforts to curb the illegal trade. What had been allegedly impossible in the 1830s and 1840s seems to have been achieved in a matter of months, perhaps in little more than a year, with intense vigilance and repression going on during 1851.³⁰ In the late 1840s, the last years of the contraband trade, the number of Africans introduced into the country annually was appalling: 52,395 were illegally reduced to bondage in 1846; 61,731 in 1847; 61,757 in 1848; and 57,504 in 1849. In 1850, with British warships patrolling the Brazilian coast more aggressively than ever before, slavers still managed to smuggle 31,161 Africans into the country, which meant a reduction to the level of contraband observed in the early 1840s. In 1851, the year in which the Brazilian government's repression of the trade took shape, some 5,595 Africans were introduced illegally, followed by just 984 in 1852, and none in the

27 Robert W. Slenes, "Malungu, Ngoma's Coming': Africa Hidden and Discovered in Brazil," in *Mostra do Redescobrimento: Negro de Corpo e Alma—Black in Body and Soul*, ed. Nelson Aguilar (São Paulo, 2000), 221–229; Robert W. Slenes, "L'arbre Nsanda Replanté. Cultes d'Affliction Kongo et Identité des Esclaves de Plantation dans le Brésil du Sud-Est (1810–1888)," *Cahiers du Brésil Contemporain* 67/68 (2007): Partie 11, 217–313.

28 Sidney Chalhou, "The Politics of Disease Control: Yellow Fever and Race in Nineteenth Century Rio de Janeiro," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 25, Part 3 (1993): 441–463; Dale T. Graden, "An Act 'Even of Public Security': Slave Resistance, Social Tensions, and the End of the International Slave Trade to Brazil, 1835–1856," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 76, no.2 (1996): 249–282.

29 Leslie Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade, 1807–1869* (Cambridge, 1970).

30 See, for example, *Relatório apresentado ... pelo ministro e secretário D'Estado dos Negócios da Justiça Eusébio de Queiróz Coitinho Mattoso Camara*, 1852, 9–10; also, maços IJ1-379, IJ1-824, IJ1-840, IJ1-865, IJ1-910.

following years until 1856, in which a last episode resulted in the introduction of 320 Africans.³¹

How were the would-be rioters of January 1852 affected by the aggressive campaign against the slave trade in 1851? The ostensible measures to prevent the contraband trade must have had a strong impact countrywide, considering the dimensions such business had acquired, the network of services and communications it required, and the enormous amount of capital invested. The raids against perpetrators conducted during 1851 sought to abort specific instances of contraband and to dissuade traders from making further attempts. For instance, in November 1851, the president of Pernambuco wrote to the minister of justice to report that in the village of Garanhuns, where there would be riots in the following January, there had been an apprehension of 39 Africans who had been recently disembarked in the nearby province of Alagoas and taken there to be sold. The provincial president alleged that the success of the operation was due to the fact that he had fired supposedly conniving police officials and taken other measures to make proprietors shy away from buying smuggled Africans, forcing the slave dealer to keep them longer than he had planned and facilitating his arrest.³² According to the minister of justice, in his official report to the parliament pertaining to 1852, the central government feared that the large apparatus of repression deployed in the southern part of the Empire would divert slave traders to northern provinces, where Africans would be disembarked and later sent to southern provinces by means of the coastal maritime trade.³³ As a consequence, the correspondence sent to the minister of justice by the presidents of the northern provinces in the early 1850s shows that they were under pressure to remain vigilant regarding possible clandestine disembarkations, and were asked to supervise carefully the issuing of passports to slaves being transported from one province to the other.³⁴ Furthermore, slave prices soared in the southern provinces during 1851, causing an immediate growth in the internal slave trade. According to the minister of justice, just 940 slaves had arrived in Rio from other provinces

31 www.slavevoyages.org (24 May 2017).

32 Maço IJ1-325, ANRJ.

33 *Relatório apresentado ... pelo ministro e secretário D'Estado dos Negócios da Justiça Eusébio de Queiróz Coitinho Mattoso Camara*, 1852, 9–10.

34 See note 6 above. For a description of measures to prevent the transportation to southern provinces of Africans recently arrived by contraband, see the letter of the president of the province of Alagoas to the minister of justice, 28 April 1852, maço IJ1-910, ANRJ.

in 1849; in 1850, there were 1,074, but the number jumped to 3,088 in 1851, and 1,473 had already entered from January to mid-April 1852.³⁵

The significant growth of the internal slave trade in the context of the intense repression and actual cessation of the African trade must have caused alarm among the free and freed population of African descent in the northern provinces. The kidnapping and selling away into slavery of children of African descent were not unheard of events in those provinces. In fact, in February when the riots were still unfolding in some places, the police of the province of Rio Grande do Norte investigated “the kidnapping of a child named João, six years old, free, son of the *crioula* [a Brazilian-born black woman] Galdina,” who they suspected had already been sent to another province.³⁶ Two years later, in September 1854, during a discussion in the chamber of deputies concerning the continued growth of the internal slave trade and about whether the central government should do something to bring it under control, a deputy from Bahia alleged that, in addition to the threat to the economic prosperity of the northern provinces, there should be a law to regulate such trade because it had caused “the appearance of a new kind of speculation in the northern provinces—namely, to reduce free people to bondage.” He proceeded to say that “helpless children, *pardos* and blacks, are sold by people to whom they are entrusted”; other criminals “resort to violence to kidnap children and sell them!”³⁷

Moreover, the rioters’ apprehension concerning birth certificates must be seen in the context of repeated episodes of children of freed and free women of African descent being baptized as slaves by abusive landlords willing to take advantage of the vulnerability and dependence of poor people of color. On 24 December 1851, the Director General of Indians wrote to the president of the province of Pernambuco regarding concerns for his personal safety, as he was about to return to Recife, the provincial capital.³⁸ According to him, “anarchists”—that is, members of the Liberal Party—had spread rumors that the decree on civil registration was intended “to reduce people of color to slavery,” and that he had gone to Rio de Janeiro in person to propose the decree to the Imperial government. More interestingly, however, he also attributed the animosity against him to the supposedly false contention that free children of African descent to whom he had become a godparent recently appeared

35 *Relatório apresentado ... pelo ministro e secretário D'Estado dos Negócios da Justiça Eusébio de Queiróz Coitinho Mattoso Camara*, 1852, 9.

36 Maço IJ1-287, ANRJ.

37 *Annaes do Parlamento Brasileiro, Camara dos Srs. Deputados*, 1 September 1854.

38 Maço IJ1-824, ANRJ.

“in the book of the parish priest as his slaves.”³⁹ Hence the rioters’ suspicion regarding birth certificates may suggest that they thought their children would become even more vulnerable to illegal enslavement than they already were in baptisms performed in local parishes.

5 Telling Histories of Illegal Enslavement

Although the rule in public discourse was to maintain silence about the pervasiveness and scale of illegal enslavement—or the frequent threat of it—as a structural conditioning of the lives of free and freed people of African descent, there are plenty of narratives of illegal enslavement produced by blacks themselves in nineteenth-century Brazil, most (but not all) of them accounts submitted to police and judicial authorities in criminal and civil court cases. Luiz Gama, a well-known black abolitionist and republican, wrote an autobiographical letter in 1880, in which illegal enslavement appeared as the major turning point in his life history. Gama became a self-taught lawyer and a journalist who professed to hate all masters and kings. He built his fame beginning in the late 1860s, when he filed successive appeals for freedom in the province of São Paulo, arguing that the captives he represented had been smuggled into the country after the enactment of the law of 1831. In addition, he wrote newspaper articles denouncing judges who refused to acknowledge and investigate these claims. It appears that the daring of Luiz Gama remained an isolated case in the 1860s; however, it may have played a part in the coming of the gradual emancipation law of 1871, which created a national slave registry intended to stabilize the existing slave property.⁴⁰

Luiz Gama wrote his autobiographical letter at the request of a friend, a journalist like himself, who wanted to publish a piece about Gama’s life.⁴¹ He related that he had been born free in Salvador in 1830, the son of an *africana livre*—a liberated African woman—and a white man belonging to a wealthy and traditional Bahian family of Portuguese origin. According to him, his mother, often suspected of being involved in slave insurrections, had to leave

39 For further examples, see Sidney Chalhoub, *A Força da Escravidão*, 263–268.

40 Elciene Azevedo, *O Direito dos Escravos. Lutas Jurídicas e Abolicionismo na Província de São Paulo* (Campinas, 2010); Elciene Azevedo, *Orfeu de Carapinha: a Trajetória de Luiz Gama na Imperial Cidade de São Paulo* (Campinas, 1999).

41 The first book to have reproduced the letter and studied its content was Sud Menucci, *O Precursor do Abolicionismo no Brasil (Luiz Gama)* (São Paulo, 1938); see also Lígia Fonseca Ferreira, “Luiz Gama por Luiz Gama: carta a Lúcio de Mendonça,” *Tereza. Revista de Literatura Brasileira da USP* 8/9 (2008): 300–321.

the Bahian capital in 1837. Luiz Gama remained with his father until 1840, when economic troubles hit the family hard and he was sold as a slave by his own father, thus sent along with others to Rio and then to bondage in coffee plantations in the province of São Paulo. He proceeded to tell of his experiences in São Paulo, of how his Bahian origin made it difficult for him to be sold, given the reputation for rebelliousness of slaves from there, resulting in his staying in the capital of the province where he learned to read and write and managed to obtain his freedom. Luiz Gama's autobiographical letter is fraught with silences of his own, such as the name of his father and the precise circumstances of his regaining his freedom. These omissions seem to have prevented historians from checking the veracity of key details of Gama's story, although several passages of it are supported by other contemporary documents. Although I would not suggest that checking the accuracy of such details is unimportant—at the very least it can help us to explore further the intentions of the author—it is clear that the letter aimed at a deeper truth: That is, portraying a more collective dimension of the experience of people of African descent in nineteenth-century Brazil, and how it remained marked by the vulnerability of freedom associated with the widespread practice of illegal enslavement.

The life history of Luiz Gama, combined with so many others found especially in civil and criminal court cases, may help us to revise what has become perhaps the master narrative of the history of Brazilian slavery in the recent past. Studies on the subject have consistently emphasized the fact that slaves in Brazil had a better chance of achieving freedom than their counterparts in other slave societies, leading historians to seek sources in notarial archives to offer dense descriptions and interpretations of both the masters' ideology regarding freedom and the slaves' strategies for securing their liberty.⁴² Nonetheless, the narrative of Luiz Gama, politically informed and self-conscious as it is, suggests that the precariousness and even the loss of freedom constituted, paradoxically, an equally relevant dimension of the experience of people of African descent living in the slave society in which manumission rates were perhaps the most significant in modern slavery.

This way of looking at the available evidence allows a fresh perspective on the life history told by José, supposedly a slave of João Goulart, thirty-seven years old, single, and a shoemaker. José was arrested in the city of Rio on

42 For example, Sidney Chalhou, *Visões da Liberdade: Uma História das Últimas Décadas da Escravidão na Corte* (São Paulo, 1990). For recent reviews of the vast body of literature on Brazilian slavery, see Robert Slenes, "Brazil," in *The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas*, eds. Robert Paquette and Mark Smith (Oxford/ New York, 2010), 111–133; Herbert Klein and João José Reis, "Slavery in Brazil," in *The Oxford Handbook of Latin American History*, ed. José Moya (Oxford/New York, 2011), 181–211.

27 April 1865, accused of murdering his alleged master's son-in-law.⁴³ He confessed to having stabbed the victim out of despair caused by harsh physical punishment imposed by his master. Answering questions from a police officer, José declared that he had been born free and that his mother was still alive in the county of Pau d'Alho, in Pernambuco. José probably belonged to a family whose members had recently obtained freedom; perhaps the first generation of a family of freed people. His mother carried the names of "Maria" and "Conceição," alluding to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and very common among freed women.⁴⁴ In addition, she had managed to have her son baptized by a person of a higher social status, a "Lieutenant Colonel of the National Guard," a strategy to bring recognition to her child's status as free or freed. However, poverty and destitution, and perhaps the hope of achieving better economic means, made José take his chances in the nation's capital, therefore falling prey to criminal gangs willing to enslave free people and sell them to coffee planters.

José's narrative brings us full circle in this text. Pau d'Alho, the county he came from in Pernambuco and where his mother still lived, was considered the main propagation center of the riots against enslavement in January 1852. If José had been 37 years old when arrested in 1865, then he would have been 24 in 1852; old enough to have participated in the riots, or at least to have had strong memories of the event. Finding details of his life history in the archive is a stroke of luck that leads us to think of how much of his narrative of having been illegally enslaved exposed a social logic he could not escape from, and the articulation of a political culture that helped to interpret and deal with the situation in daily life; by himself and others who shared similar experiences and anxieties.

43 Arquivo Edgard Leuenroth, UNICAMP, processo criminal (1865–6), Tribunal da Relação do Rio de Janeiro, reel 84.o.ACR.163 (microfilm copy of original belonging to the Arquivo Nacional). I have analyzed this document before in Sidney Chalhoub, "The Precariousness of Freedom," 427–429.

44 Jean Hébrard, "Esclavage et dénomination: imposition et appropriation d'un nom chez les esclaves de la Bahia au XIXe siècle," *Cahiers du Brésil Contemporain* 53/54 (2003), 31–92.