

THE SUGAR NOTARIAL OFFICE: SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF SUGAR IN COLONIAL BAHIA

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ABSTRACT

Despite being the main commodity produced and traded in colonial Brazil, the history of sugar has not attracted historians as much as other topics. The commodity, however, is remembered in all historiography that deals with the Economic and Social History of the Brazilian Northeast. This text presents the transcription of the letter from the Jesuit priest Luis da Rocha, written at the Sergipe do Conde sugar mill in the Recôncavo of All Saints Bay (1735), belonging to the collection “Jesuit Cabinet and Jesuit Registry Office”, of the National Archives of Torre do Tombo (Lisbon/Portugal). There are several themes that can be analyzed based on research in this documentation: slavery, expenses and profits, personal and racial relations, ecology and production, transportation of goods, etc. This text invites new researchers to turn their lenses to sugar, making it the protagonist of their research and drawing attention to how current the topic is.

Keywords: Jesuit Registry Office; sources; sugar; colonial Brazil

RESUMO

Apesar de ser a principal mercadoria produzida e negociada no Brasil colonial, a História do açúcar não tem atraído historiadores como outros temas. A mercadoria no entanto, é lembrada em toda a historiografia que trata da História Econômica e Social do Nordeste brasileiro. Esse texto apresenta a transcrição da carta do padre jesuíta Luis da Rocha, escrita no Engenho Sergipe do Conde no Recôncavo da Baía de Todos-os-Santos (1735), pertencente à coleção “Armário Jesuítico e Cartório dos Jesuítas”, do Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (Lisboa/Portugal). São vários os temas que podem ser abordados a partir da pesquisa nessa documentação: escravidão, gastos e lucros, relações pessoais e raciais, ecologia e produção, transportes de mercadorias etc. Este texto convida investigadores novos a voltarem suas lentes para o açúcar tornando-o protagonista de suas pesquisas e chamando a atenção para o quanto de atual é o tema.

Palavras-chave: Cartório dos Jesuítas; fontes documentais; açúcar; Brasil colonial

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Although it was the principal commodity produced and traded in the captaincy of Bahia, sugar still lacks studies that adequately address the extent and quality of its weight in the history of the region and of Brazil.

A major reference in the historiography of sugar in Bahia is Wanderley Pinho's *História de um engenho do recôncavo*. His work stands out for its positivist tradition, characterized by extensive use of documentary sources to present events. Conceived within an idea of Total History, it is a monograph that responded to a call issued by the *Instituto do Alcool e do Açúcar*, which sought to create a library on the history of sugar production in Brazil (1982 [1946]). Today, given the accumulation of information and the transcription of certain sources no longer accessible in the archives, the work has become an invaluable reference tool.

The major historiographical work on the history of sugar for the Brazilian colonial period, however, remains Stuart Schwartz's *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society (Segredos Internos)*. Since its publication in English in 1985, several articles, monographs, master's theses, and doctoral dissertations have addressed the subject in relation to Bahia, yet no comprehensive study has emerged that updates the themes explored by Schwartz, advances discussions where he lacked the scope or historiographical orientation of his time, pursued different interests, or simply could not obtain answers from the sources available to him (1999).

Another classic is Vera Ferlini's *Terra, trabalho e poder*. Unlike Schwartz, the author broadens her scope to encompass the sugar-producing society of the Northeast of the State of Brazil. Although she draws extensively on important documentation concerning Bahia (also consulted by Schwartz), Ferlini widens the documentary lens by analyzing sources related to the captaincy of Pernambuco (1988). Already in the twenty-first century, Ferlini published *Açúcar e colonização*, a book that gathers eight texts originally presented in lectures, conferences, or previously published in journals. As the author herself notes, her studies produced after that initial work demonstrate "the profound relationship between the social configuration required for the maintenance of Portuguese domination and the forms of access to land" (2010, p. 32).

From this same period, the works of Evaldo Cabral de Mello on the Dutch invasion of northeastern Brazil and its repercussions up to the creation of the town of Recife also stand out. Drawing heavily on the wealth of sources produced during the

period and preserved in collections in the Netherlands, the history of sugar in the seventeenth century—particularly in the northern captaincies—is the field that has undergone the most significant renewal in recent decades (2007 [1975]; 2003 [1995]; 1997; 2012).

In a recent article analyzing the economy of colonial Northeast Brazil, George Cabral de Sousa, Gustavo Acioli, and Mozart Menezes emphasize how little progress has been made in studies on sugar in colonial Brazil since the aforementioned classics (2022, pp. 50–53). They highlight, however, the work of Bert Barickman, which covers the late colonial period and the Brazilian Empire, demonstrating the high concentration of enslaved labor in the hands of plantation owners. According to the authors, although much work remains to be done, the topic that has perhaps seen the greatest advances is the trade in sugar between the Northeast and the Kingdom. Notable in this regard are the studies of Leonor F. Costa, Christopher Ebert, and Daniel Strum.

The dossier presented here will certainly draw the attention of the academic community and help strengthen studies on colonial sugar even as it already contributes by offering new research on the subject. The transcription that follows is but one among hundreds of letters and other types of documents that may attract new researchers, new perspectives, and ultimately new approaches to the history of sugar.

The Jesuit Notarial Archive and Research Possibilities

This text presents the transcription of a letter written by the Jesuit priest Luis da Rocha, composed at the Sergipe do Conde sugar mill in 1735 and belonging to the collection “*Armário Jesuítico e Cartório dos Jesuítas*” of the Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (ANTT/Lisbon). Making it available in full is an effort to attract young researchers who may take an interest in the various themes it points us toward.²

According to the custodial history of the ANTT, the “Jesuit Registry” (*Cartório dos Jesuítas*) was “sent by the Directorate-General of the Tribunal de Contas to the Torre do Tombo” on 27 December 1881 and received archival treatment in 2009. Although its

² I came across this collection in the summer of 2023 while fulfilling a request from Evergton Sales Souza, who needed some documents in Lisbon. At the time, he emphasized that I would enjoy the topics covered. He was right. I am grateful to him for not objecting to the transcription of this letter for this text.

documentation pertains primarily to the Colégio de Santo Antão in Lisbon, it also includes documents from other Jesuit colleges such as those of Braga, São Roque, São Miguel Island, Angra (Terceira Island), among others. It also contains documentation from India, China, and Brazil.

Among the Brazilian materials, the correspondence and accounting records of the Sergipe do Conde (Recôncavo) and Santana (Ilhéus) sugar mills stand out. Altogether, these constitute “106 bundles of documents” of great relevance to the study of the Portuguese Empire.³

Authors such as Stuart Schwartz (1999) and Paulo de Assunção (2009 [2003]) stand out for their extensive research in the Jesuit Registry. Others, including Vera Ferlini (1988) and Marcelo Henrique Dias (2021), have used selected documents that best addressed their historiographical questions.⁴ While these studies seek answers regarding the sugar economy, Evergton Sales Souza (2024) recently used the same collection to analyze religious life and resistance through a case study of bigamy, demonstrating the richness of research possibilities afforded by the collection.

One particularly prominent subject within this collection is the Sergipe do Conde sugar mill. The Engenho Sergipe was a sugar-producing estate created by Mem de Sá during his tenure and his efforts to open the agricultural frontier between 1558 and 1572 in the Recôncavo of the Bay of All Saints (SCHWARTZ, 1999, p. 35). A widower, he bequeathed the mill to his son Francisco de Sá, who, dying childless, left it to his only surviving sister, Dona Felipa de Sá, who was at the Convent of Santa Catarina de Sena in Évora. Possessing a significant fortune, Felipa married D. Fernando de Noronha, who would inherit the title of Count of Linhares. The mill belonged to the House of Linhares from 1576 to 1618, when Dona Felipa, Countess of Linhares, already widowed and under the influence of her confessor, bequeathed all her assets to the Jesuit College of Santo Antão in Lisbon. During the period in which it belonged to the House of Linhares, the estate came to be popularly known as Engenho do Conde and, after her death, as Engenho da Condessa, ultimately reaching the present day as Engenho Sergipe do Conde (Schwartz,

³ The collection “Armário Jesuítico e Cartório dos Jesuítas” can be consulted at <https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=1222241>, accessed on 12/10/2024.

⁴ See also: ASSUNÇÃO, Paulo de. “A administração do Engenho de Santana dos Ilhéus nas primeiras décadas do século XVIII.” *Dimensões*, v. 50, n. 1, pp. 89–108, 2023.

1999, pp. 393–399). Let us consider some of the thematic possibilities offered by this documentation.

Religious life, slavery, and relations between the free white population and the enslaved or freed Black population are but a few of the topics open to analysis. One passage of the letter provides a concrete example of what historiography has drawn from baptismal records. When authors such as Schwartz and Gudeman (1988, pp. 33–59) assert that godparenthood strengthened personal ties, we may imagine such everyday relations, but we do not often see them as clearly as Father Rocha describes them. The Jesuit is direct in showing that several people who went to the mill during the harvest “were affiliates of the whites, who all came as they usually did to fetch molasses.” This practice helped sustain the networks of *compadrio* [godparenthood-based ritual/spiritual kinship], feeding ritual kin while simultaneously negatively affecting sugar production by reducing the final output.

As Schwartz has already emphasized, the collection of letters makes it possible to analyze the administration of the sugar mills. According to the author, “the transfer of the administration of the [Engenho] Santana in 1730 generated a series of accusations and counter-accusations” (Schwartz, 1999, p. 325). A systematic analysis of the correspondence allows us to gauge how similar or different the administrative practices of Jesuit priests were across the sugar mills they managed in Brazil.

Studying sugar also means returning to the study of commodities. The researcher may direct their lens toward straightforward questions: How is a natural product transformed, having value added to it, consumed, and ultimately altering traditional dietary patterns? Where is it produced, and how is it inserted into global markets? How does this product become currency or marriage dowries? Following the insights of Leonardo Marques and Alexander Gebara, these topics are only a small sample of the “diversity of the possible forms of writing histories of the commodity” (2023, p. 15; Hornborg, 2023, pp. 14–39).

Perhaps one of the most current approaches to which the documentation from the Sergipe mill may contribute is the perspective of Ecological or Environmental History. As can be seen in the letter from Father Luis da Rocha—and in many others in the collection—the priests discuss the influence of rains and droughts on sugar and food

production. Hunger is a recurring theme. New studies may contribute to understanding human degradation within the ecology of both the Bay of All Saints and its Recôncavo. A good example is Ana Lunara Morais’s study of agricultural expansion in the Northern Captaincies of the State of Brazil, the quality of sugar produced, and disputes arising from “differences and alterations in the quality of the sugar and in the weight of the chests in which it was stored” (2022, pp. 178–197).

As Leonardo Marques and Gabriel da Rocha assert, “the order of the day for the environmental history of modern imperialism consists in confronting, in renewed fashion, questions of domination and causality from multiple perspectives and geographies” (2022, pp. 145–159). Taking these insights to a more global scale, we may broaden our investigation to other Jesuit collections and consider how nature affected the production of various commodities throughout the Lusitanian Empire, drawing on documentation produced in Brazil, Angola, São Tomé and Príncipe, India, and elsewhere.

This text invites new researchers to direct their lens toward sugar, making it the protagonist of their inquiries and calling attention to how profoundly contemporary the topic remains. Sugar monoculture still occupies millions of hectares of national territory, challenging ecological balance. In the last century, sugarcane production was revitalized by government programs promoting alcohol as an alternative to fossil fuels. Once again, sugar became a new martyr of Brazil’s economy, a new agent driving agricultural frontier expansion with little regard for whatever—or whoever—stood in its way. The future reenacting the past! For all these reasons, we see that sugar was never a cycle—or, if it was, it remains ongoing, never having come to an end.

Transcription

The transcription followed the norms of the *Revista de Fontes* (Unifesp), though maintaining all abbreviations. Thus, punctuation and orthography remain as in the original.⁵ Words written with strikethrough were rendered with a line, e.g., nos; when I was uncertain about a word, I used brackets, e.g., [dúvida].

Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Cartório dos Jesuítas, bundle 71, doc. 110.

English Version

01 – Very Reverend Father Prefect.
02 – Sir.
03 – I hope that Your Reverence continues in as perfect health as I wish for the good of that Church.
04 – And for the patronage and subsistence of this mill. As for me, may Our Lord be well praised, for until now I have remained in good health,
05 – despite the many illnesses that are reigning here.
06 – I finally arrived at this mill after innumerable fears and dangers, calms that
07 – lasted more than thirty days. I was received by Father Vellozo with great charity and affection, which in no way diminishes
08 – the veneration and respect with which I treat him. In the brief time in which I have known him, I have experienced the zeal and good disposition with which he has managed and governed this mill during the time when
09 – strength and good health assisted him; but the many years and ailments have already so prostrated and
10 – incapacitated him for governing it that I truly do not know how a chest of sugar reaches
12 – Portugal, seeing the many losses that arise from the lack of assistance from a person to whom it might be entrusted. First,
13 – he suffers greatly from lack of sight, so much so that he cannot distinguish anyone, for even the very slaves
14 – must tell him who they are, from which follow great harms, for even in broad daylight,
15 – while he was in his cell, they managed to steal from the bench on which he was seated the bag of coins,

Original

01 – M.R.P.Perf.to
02 – S.r
03 – Estimo continue a V.R.^a saude tão perft.^a como lhe dezejo p.^a o bem dessa. Igr.^a
04 – e Patrocinio, e Subsist.^a deste Eng.^o Eu seja o Snr.^o bem d.^o athe o presente tenho passado com saude
05 –sem emb.^o das t.tas doenças, q por cá vão reynando.
06 – Cheguei finalm.te a este Eng.^o depois de innumeraveis Sustos, e perigos Calmarias, q
07 – passarão de 30 dias. Fui recebido do P. Vellozo com m.ta Charid.e e amor a qual lhe não des-
08 – merece a Veneração, e Resp.^o com q o trato. Nos poucos tempos, em q o tenho tratado tenho expri-
09 – mentado o Zelo, e boa disposição com q tem tratado, e governado este Eng.^o o tempo, em q a
10 – forsas, e boa disposição o ajudavão: porem os m.tos annos, achaques o tem ja tão prostrado, e
11 – impossibilitado p.^a o governar, q não verdadeiramt.e não Sei Como chega Caixa de assucar a
12 – Portugal vendo os m.tos descam.os q tem por falta de assist.^a de pessoa, a quem doa Primei=
13 – ramt.e padece grande falta de vista, tanto, q não destingue ninguem, pois athe Aos mesmos pretos
14 – lhe he Necesr.^o dizerem pr.[a] quem São, donde Se Seguem grandes damnos, pois athe a hora do dia es=
15 – tando elle no Cubiculo lhe chegarão a furtar da banca, a q' estava Sentado o Saco das patacas,

⁵ <https://periodicos.unifesp.br/index.php/fontes/about/submissions>, acess 14/10/2024.

- 16 – which, because he kept silent—although he felt the loss—he would not have seen in the thief’s hands had a neighbor not
- 17 – warned him at the very moment of what the slave was carrying.
- 18 – There is no lack of those who take advantage of this man’s goodness, the mill being the common dwelling
- 19 – of whoever wishes to take advantage of it. I do not speak only of the ingrained custom of our people of Bahia
- 20 – to come stay here either during holidays or to convalesce—which is very ordinary—but also of some
- 21 – who, abusing Father Vellozo’s goodness, come here to stay eight or nine months, managing
- 22 – the house and its provisions with the brother who was here, in their own fashion, as if they were its masters,
- 23 – with Father Vellozo contradicting them in nothing, content only with what they gave him, being it necessary, for the subsidy of so
- 24 – many expenses, to buy more provisions from the Kingdom at excessive price. There are also
- 25 – laymen who have taken advantage of the lodging, especially a cleric who, they tell me,
- 26 – lived here, with a room and a served table, attracted like others by the good wine,
- 27 – and provisions from the Kingdom, as even the laymen themselves told me in Bahia. But what
- 28 – has cost me most is a lay Dominican friar who, after wandering as an apostate in the
- 29 – Indies for twelve years—as the brother who comes from India well knows—fled on the ship
- 30 – that was going to the Kingdom, and after wandering about Bahia, not wishing to go to Portugal out of fear of the superiors, he
- 31 – finally found asylum in the goodness of Father Vellozo, who received him in this mill, where he stayed
- 32 – four years (I truly do not know with what conscience), having of his Order
- 33 – a room, eating in our refectory the provisions that at such great expense come from the
- 34 – Kingdom, tearing our clothing, giving orders to the slaves in everything that concerned his
- 35 – convenience, having a horse to ride, slaves to serve him, and what is worse, giving counsel to the
- 16 – o qual, por q ele Se Calava ainda q Sentia a falta lhe Não veria às Maõs se hú vezinho não ad=
- 17 – vertisse no m.to dr.º q o Negro trazia.
- 18 – Desta bond.e de homem não falta quem se aproveite, Sendo o Eng.º habitação cõm=
- 19 – mua de quem Se quer Aproveitar della, Não digo Só do inveterado Costume dos Nossos da Bahia
- 20 – Virem Aqui Estar, ou pelas ferias, ou a Convalescer, q isto he m.to ordinário, Mas tambem de alguns,
- 21 – q Abuzando da bond.e do P. Vellozo Vem Aqui estar 8, e 9 mezes, governando Com o Irm. q
- 22 – cá estava a caza e provim.tos della a Seu Modo Como Se fossem os Snr.es della, sem o P. Vellozo em
- 23 – nada lhe hir á mão, mas Só contentandose, Com o q’ lhe davão, Sendo Neces.º p.ª Subsidio de tan=
- 24 – tos gastos Comprar Mais alguns provim.tos do Reyno por preso excessivo. Não faltam tam=
- 25 – bem Seculares, q Se tem aproveitado da Estancia, principalm.te hú clerigo, q Me dizem vi=
- 26 – nha estar, Com Cubiculo, e Meza posta, atrahidos assim huns, Como outros do bom vinho,
- 27 – e provim.tos do Reyno, Como Athe os mesmos Seculares Me disseram Na Bahia, porem, o q
- 28 – mais me tem Custado, he hú frade Dominico Leigo, q depois de andar apostata na In=
- 29 – dias 12 Annos, Como m.to Sabe o Irm. q vai da India fugio Na Nao, q vinha p.ª o Reyno, e
- 30 – depois de andar pirangando pella Bahia por não hir p.ª Portugal, Com medo dos Superiores, veyo
- 31 – finalm.te A achar asilo Na bond.e do P.e Vellozo, o qual o Recebeo Neste Eng.º Aonde esteve
- 32 – 4. Annos (não sei verdadeiram.te com q Consciencia es utrague parte) [sic] tendo a Sua Ordem
- 33 – Hú Cubiculo Comendo No Nosso Refeitório os provim.tos, q com tão grande despendio vem do
- 34 – Reyno, Rompendo A Nossa Roupa, dando Ordens A pretos Em tudo No q tocava A Sua con=
- 35 – veniencia, tendo Cavalos p.ª Andar Negros p.ª o Servir, e o q he mais a dar Rezões Ao P.e (cujos

<p>Father (whose 36 – age admitted everything) in matters of governance, directing everything to his own advantage; finally, he 37 – acted as surgeon at our expense, having no more experience of it than the book he found here, and thus [f. 1v] 01 – And thus he set himself to making pills, which he applied to any kind of illness, as our 02 – surgeon confesses, and he truly knows something of it, and thus he went curing, throughout these villages, the poor 03 – slaves and rustics, who believed that the scrap of habit he wore on his back conveyed to him the art 04 – of surgeon, which he exercised at everyone’s expense, and especially at ours, for even our apothecary 05 – he used for everything. He came to meet me at the dock all smiling and cheerful, but I, who already from Bahia 06 – came well informed, treated him in such a way that he quickly slipped away, the slaves giving him a beating, for 07 – I desired nothing of such a guest, who made himself master; for here they tell me he is near the mill. I confess 08 – that I have desired not to give the least displeasure to Father Vellozo, but if the friar returns, which I sup– 09 – pose he will not, he will have to leave by the same way he came. And the misfortune is that, though there are so many who should safeguard 10 – the interests of this mill for their own particular advantage, never in so long a time did any scruple arise in this matter. 11 – Secondly, the damages that have followed to this mill because 12 – of the lack of assistance from a person capable are irreparable, for the many years and ailments that Father Vellozo suffers 13 – render him unable to leave the house except for Mass, for which the lack of 14 – sight and insufficiency of strength should already incapacitate him. The brother who was here from Bahia—may God grant that such a brother 15 – had never been here—for as I have seen with my own eyes, it would have been better for the mill</p>	<p>36 – annos tudo admêtião) em matéria de governos, q tudo Atirava A Sua Conveniencia, finalm.te 37 – fosse Surgião á Nossa Custa, não tendo disto Mais esper.^a q o d[a]r algú, L.^o q por cá achou, e assim [f. 1v] 01 – E assim se meteo a fazer pirolas, que Aplicava a qualquer casta de doença, Como Confessa o 02 – nosso Surgião, e he Certo Sabe disso, e assim hia Curando por esta aldeas os pobres ne= 03 – gros e Rusticos, q entendião, q o bocado de habito, q trazia as Costas lhe [insimdia] a arte 04 – de Surgião, q a Custa de todos exercitava, e m.to mais a nossa, pois athe a nossa botica da= 05 – va pa.^a tudo. Foime esperar ao Cais todo Rizonho, e alegre, porem eu, q já da Bahia vi= 06 – nha bem indormado o tratei de Sorte, q elle Logo Se Safou dando lhe os pretos huá vaya, pois 07 – nada desejava tal hospede, q se fazia Snr.’, pois aqui me dizem, q está de perto do Eng.^o, Confesso 08 – q tenho [anhelado] a Não dar minimo desgosto ao P. Vellozo, porem Se o frade voltar, o q Sup= 09 – ponho q não farâ, há de tornar por onde veyo. A a desgraça he, q havendo tanto quem Zele 10 – as Cauzas deste Eng.^o pella Sua Conv.^a particular, Nunca Hovesse em tanto tempo [ag.r] occorresse escrupulo Nesta Materia. 11 – Em 2.^o Lugar São irreparaveis os damnos, q tem Seguido A este Eng.^o por 12 – falta de assist.^a de pessoa, A quem doa, pois Ao P. Vellozo o impossibilitão os M.tos annos e achaques, 13 – q padece a Sahir de Caza não mais, q p.^a a Missa, q p.^a esta o devião impossibirlitar a falta de 14 – vista e insust.^a de forças. O Irm. q ca estava da Bahia q provera D.s q tal Irm. 15 – nunca cá estivera, pois como tenho visto com meos olhos melhor fora Ao Eng.^o Mandar</p>
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to have

16 – one brought from Portugal every year, because of the very grave consequences that follow from having here

17 – brothers from Bahia, mainly when having as Superior the goodness, not to say the blindness, of Father Luís

18 – Vellozo. For this brother understood the Father’s disposition to be contrary to anyone

19 – interfering in the governance of the slaves⁶[...] so as not to deviate one point from his will for his own

20 – convenience, guarding such avarice that he went out only to Mass, not

21 – caring for anything but his own person and his own convenience, which within doors he kept very well, and now

22 – not even with warm bread will he detach himself from here; and since thus no one assisted in the work–

23 – shops but slaves and overseers, all of whom go on stealing each one where he can, there have followed

24 – irreparable damages both in the mill and in the farms, and beginning with the mill:

25 – First, when the mill begins to grind, it is governed by a master sugar–maker and a boiler–man,

26 – both white men, to whom a large salary is paid during crushing time, which is eight months when

27 – it is much; the rest is all slave labor, from which follows that the slaves steal the cane and take it to sell

28 – on the beach, and thus slaves and whites alike each do what they can, and what is worse, concerning the mo–

29 – lasses, which is the sugar when it is at the point to crystallize. One afternoon I went with the brother who comes from India,

30 – a few days after arriving at this house, to see how it was done, and observing that at the mill’s dock

31 – several canoes full of people were arriving, who all disembarked and went to stand as sentinels

32 – at the mill’s door, some with jars, others with pitchers, I called one whom I judged more

33 – capable, and asking him who those people

16 – vir Cada anno hú de Portugal, pelas gravissimas Consequencias, q se Seguem de cá estar

17 – Irm. da Bahia, principalm.te tendo por Superior, a bond.e por Não dizer a Segueira do P. Luis

18 – Velozo. Este pois Irm. entendô Ser o genio do P. Velozo Contr.º a q ninguem Se intro=

19 – meta a governar os Negros [&.]⁷ por não descrepar hú ponto da Sua vontade em ordem a

20 – Sua Conveniencia, de tal Sorte guardava A uzura, q não Sahia mais, q a Missa, não

21 – tratando mais, q do individuo, e da Sua Conv.ª q’ das portas a dentro a fazia m.to bem, e agora

22 – Nem Com pão quente Se desaparegará de cá; E como assim Ninguem assistia nas Offi=

23 – cinas, mais, q Negros, e officiais, q todos vão a furtar Cada hú por onde pode, Se tem Segui=

24 – do irreparaveis damnos, assim Nos Eng.º, Como Nas fazendas, e Começando pello Eng.º

25 – Primeiram.te começando o Eng.º A moer governão o hú M.e de assucar, e hú bangr.º

26 – ambos homens brancos, A quem Se paga grosa Sold.ª no tempo da moenda, q São 8 mezes qd.º he

27 – m.to, o mais tudo he negraria donde Se Segue, q os Negros furtão a Cana e a Levão a vender

28 – a praia, e assim Negros, Como brancos Cada hú por sua fazem o q podê, e o q he mais no me=

29 – lado, q he o assucar qd.º está em ponto p.ª qualhar. Fui huá tarde com o Irm. q vay da Índia

30 – alguns dias depois de chegar p.ª esta Caza, a ver Como Se fazia, e observando, q ao Cais do Eng.º

31 – aportavaõ varias Canôas cheias de gente, q toda desembarcava, e Se hia por de Sentinela

32 – Á porta do Eng.º húns Com potes, outros Com quartas, admirado chamei hú, q julguei Mais

33 – capaz, e perguntandolhe, q gente erá aquella

⁶ Unidentified symbol. At times it appears to be an “& = et caetera,” but the phrasing does not always make sense if read that way. I will use this symbol hereafter within [&] to inform the reader of the uncertainty. I thank Alícia Duhá Lose for the dialogue on this matter.

were, he answered that they were godchildren of the whites	Me Respondeo erão affilhados dos brancos
34 – who all came, as they customarily did, to fetch molasses, and that they did not enter because they saw me	34 – q todos vinhão como Custumavaõ A buscar Melado, e q Não entravão, por Me verem
35 – inside, and that the Father Superior did not know, because as he did not witness it and gave more credit to the lies	35 – dentro, e q o P. Sup.or não o Sabia, por q Como não prezenciava, e dava Mais cred.º às mentiras
36 – of the whites than to their truths, he had ordered in everything that they obey the whites without	36 – dos bancos, q as Suas verd.es eles tinha ordenado em tudo Obedecessem aos brancos sem se
37 – involving themselves in anything else; they had no means to give him account. I went to the Father, who,	37 – meterem Com Mais alguá Couza, Não tinhaõ acção p. ^a lhe darem Conta. Fui dar ao P.e o qual
38 – informing himself with the slaves, found it all to be as stated and found himself surprised at something so old; he gave	38 – informandose dos Negros achou Ser tudo Asima e achouse Novo, em couza tão antiga pasou
39 – orders to the slaves to watch [...] but the remedy is palliative. All this proceeds	39 – Ordem Aos pretos, q vigiassem [&.] porem Ser o Medecina [paratmo] O q tudo procede
40 – from the strict seclusion of the Father, because he cannot, and of the brother, because he will not, for his own convenience	40 – da exata Clauzura do P. por não poder, e do Irm. por Não querer, p. ^a Sua Conveniencia
41 – and preservation.	41 – e conservação
[f. 2f]	[f. 2f]
01 – And only the one who sees with his own eyes can form a complete notion of what this daily loss over eight months amounts to,	01 – E só quem o vê Com Seos olhos pode formar Cabal conceito, do q impor.ta no discurso de 8 mezes
02 – and the same happens in the purging and boxing of the sugar, since everything goes through the hands of	02 – este diario dispendio, e o Mesmo he no asualhar e encaixar do assucar, q como tudo vai por maõs de
03 – slaves, without the presence of their master; each one steals wherever he can. And wishing to avoid	03 – negros, Sem a prez. ^a de Seo Snr.’ Cada hú furta por onde pode, E querendo eu com a m. ^a prezença evitar
04 – these losses by my presence, since I cannot by works but only by words, there are already whites, and even brothers, who cen–	04 – estes descam.os emp.te já q não posso por obras, ao palavras, Não faltão ja brancos, e ainda Roup. ^a q cen=
05 – sure my presence in the workshops, perhaps so as not to make more evident their past neglect, which alone should have been	05 – sure a M. ^a assist. ^a pellas officinas, talves por não fazer mais Sensível, a sua falta passada, q só devi=
06 – noticed and censured.	06 – a Ser Notada e Censurada.
07 – Nor is the damage less that follows in the farms, where for years no	07 – Não he menor o damno, q Se Segue na fazendas Aonde há annos Não tem aparecido
08 – brother of the Company has appeared, except for Brother Sinheiro, whose many reasons I now clearly see in certain	08 – Roup. ^a da Comp. ^a Alem do Irm Sinheiro, q Agora vejo eu a m.ta Rezão, q elle tinha em alguñs
09 – imprudent excesses he committed. With the approval of Father Vellozo, I went to visit the farms, and	09 – imprudentes excessos, q obrou. Fui com o beneplacito do P. Vellozo visitar as fazendas, e
10 – beginning with the first: it consists of woods, firewood, timber, and cattle; it has eighteen slaves,	10 – Comessando pella 1 ^a Consta de matos, Lenhas, madeiras e Cabeças de gado, tem 18 escravos

- 11 – one of whom is the overseer—but such an overseer that he did not know how many head of cattle he had, from which one could easily
- 12 – steal and sell without any being missed. The second and third consist of the same, but in smaller
- 13 – extent. The fourth, which lies half a league from the mill, consists of a large cane field, which partly because
- 14 – of the sun, partly because no benefit is done to it, is in a miserable state. I found
- 15 – there a white overseer who had not given a single hoe–stroke in the cane field that year, and I observed
- 16 – that the slaves complained to Father Vellozo that the overseer not only did not allow them to work in the cane field
- 17 – but not even in their own provision plots during the time allotted to them, always forcing them to work in the overseer’s own fields.
- 18 – To which Father Vellozo responded by scolding a slave woman who brought the complaint,
- 19 – giving more credit to the overseer’s lies than to the slaves’ truths, for he informed himself only from the overseer.
- 20 – I continued visiting this farm, and I found everything exactly as the slaves said, for the cane–
- 21 – field, which is the whole foundation of the mill, was ruined, and the overseer concerned himself only with improving his own lands
- 22 – and house, which he had built next to our farm at the expense of our slaves and our timbers,
- 23 – so that when he saw that my presence obliged him to work on our farm, he slipped away and shut
- 24 – himself in his own house without even saying goodbye. The sixth and seventh farms are three cane fields that are greatly
- 25 – damaged not only by the drought but also by the overseers who, being alone without the
- 26 – sight of their masters, planted manioc fields in the middle of the cane, occupying with them
- 27 – the best land; which I immediately reported to Father Vellozo, who, finding it new, ordered at once
- 28 – that the manioc fields be removed, which will be done very slowly.
- 29 – Added to all this which I recount is the great famine that has
- 30 – occurred, for most of the mill owners are ruined, obliged by hunger, thirst, and
- 31 – heat; many slaves died, horses, all the cattle,
- 11 – hú dos quais he F.or, porem tal feitor, q não Sabia quantas Cabeças de gado tinha, donde bem se
- 12 – podião furtar, e vender, Sem Se acharem Menos. A 2.^a e 3.^a constão do mesmos, porem mais
- 13 – deminutas, a 4.^a q fica meya Legoa Longe do Eng.^o Consta de hú grande Canavial, q p.te por
- 14 – Cauza do Sol, p.te por Não Se lhe fazer benef.^o algú está posto em miserável estado, Achei
- 15 – nelle hú F.or branco, q Ainda Não tinha dado este anno, hua enxadada No Canavial e observa
- 16 – q os negros Se queixavão Ao P.e Velozo, q o feitor Não Só os Não Deixava trabalhar No Canavial
- 17 – Mas nem Nas Suas Roças o tempo, q lhe he concedido, ocupandoos Sempre Nas Roças delle f.or
- 18 – Ao q o P. Velozo Respondeo Com mandar Afrontar huá Negra, q lhe veyo com esta quaixa
- 19 – por dar mais cred.^o às mentiras delle feitor, de quem Só Se informava, q as Verd.es Aos Negros
- 20 – Continuei a Vesitar esta fazenda, e achei Ser tudo como os Negros diziao, por q o Ca=
- 21 – navial, q o tudo do Eng.^o estava perd.^o e o feitor Só cuidava em beneficiar as suas terras,
- 22 – e Caza, q levantou junto a Nossa fazenda A custa dos Nossos escravos, e Nossas Madr.as
- 23 – tanto, q vio, q a m.^a prez.^a o obrigava a trabalhar Na Nossa fazendo [sic], Se Safou e Se me
- 24 – meteo Na Sua Caza Sem dizer aD.s A 6^a e 7^a fazenda São 3 Canaviaes q estão m-
- 25 – damnificados Não Só das Calmas, Mas tambem dos feitores, q Como Estavaõ Sós Sem a
- 26 – vista de Seos Snr.es Metião Rosas pello Meyo do Canavial, ocupando com ellas
- 27 – a Melhor terra, do q dei Logo p.te ao P. Vellozo, q Achando Novo Mandou Logo
- 28 – tirar as Roças o q se fará m.to devagar.
- 29 – Acresce a tudo isto, q Refiro, a grande fome, q por tem
- 30 – havido, pois a Mayor p.te dos Snr.es de Eng.^o ficão arruinados, obrigados da fome, sede, e
- 31 – Calores [ja?] morreo m.to escravo, Cavallos,

<p>the lands uncultivated. But in 32 – ours, because it is watered, the loss was smaller, for although many slaves died, 33 – it was not as in the others, where not an ox was left alive; however, this famine did not 34 – reach Ilhéus, for much rain fell there. 35 – This, my Reverend Father, is the miserable state to which this mill is re– 36 – duced, which, in order to be restored, requires much time, much prudence, much restraint, 37 – a good manner so as not to offend the old man, whose goodness does not deserve it, and much caution and vigilance. [f. 2v] 01 – With regard to the reform of the slaves, for there are some who do whatever they please and work only when 02 – they wish, without Father Vellozo having any means to punish them, which to me truly seems sympathy or 03 – witchcraft, for he does not fail in punishment with others, and to these, at the same time that they commit 04 – insolences such as taking the key of the cell to the flour house—where likewise they were 05 – spending without the Father perceiving it, until he went to see the flour and found less—they come at night 06 – for the chickens [...] ⁷ he treats them with affection [...]. Of the overseers, who, as [word erased], play with the Fathers of 07 – Bahia, who value the well–being of their godson, the common men of the religion easily trade 08 – motives, for even in Bahia for that reason we have neither priest nor learned man capable. 09 – And Your Reverence must know that this is what obliges me to give this brief note of the state of the mill, 10 – for when I wish to remedy some things and prevent losses and excesses, I must necessarily 11 – have enemies. Therefore I ask Your Reverence to give this note to Father Rector [...] so that he may come to 12 – know the currency that circulates here, for with this I do not intend to trouble Father Vellozo, 13 – whose years and experience in this matter I greatly venerate, for nothing more can be</p>	<p>toda a boyada, as terras incultas, porem No 32 – Nosso Como He de Agoa foi Menos A perda, por q ainda, q nos morreo m.to escravo 33 – Não foi Como Nos Mais, Aonde não ficou boi com vida, porem esta fome Não 34 – Chegou aos Ilheos, por q por Lá choveo m.to. 35 – Este he Meo P. Perf.º o Miseravel estado, a q esta Reduzi= 36 – do este Eng.º q p.ª Se Hirem Reformando He Neces.º m.to tempo, m.ta prudencia, m.to Recato 37 – bom Modo por Não Molestar o Velho, cuja bond.e o Não Merece, e m.ta Cautela e vigil.ª [f. 2v] 01 – Em ordem a Reforma dos Negros porq há alguns, q fazem o q querem, e trabalhaõ Só quando 02 – querem Sem q o P. Vellozo tenha Acção p.ª os Castigar, q na verd.e Me parece Sîmpatía, ou 03 – Mandinga, pois a outros Não falta Com o Castigo, e a estes ao Mesmo tempo, q Come= 04 – tem insolencias, Como tirarlhe a chave do Cubiculo p.ª a Caza da farinha, q igoalm.te hião 05 – gastando Sem o P.e o Sentir, Senão quando foi ver a far.ª q Se achou Menos virem de noite 06 – as Galinhas [&.]⁸ trata com amor [&]. Dos officiais q Como [palavra riscada] joga com P.es da 07 –Bahia q estimaõ o bem p.ar do Seo Afilhado, q o Comum da Religião facilm.te trocaraõ 08 – Os Motivos, pois athe Na Bahia por esse Resp.º Nem P.or nem Letrado temos capaz 09 – e saiba V.Rª q isso he o q Me obriga a dar esta breve not.ª do como está o Eng.º por 10 – q quando queira Remediar algûas Couzas, e impedir descam.os e Superfluid.es necessariam.te 11 – ha de ter inimigos pello q peço a VR.ª dá esta Not.ª ao P.e R.or [&.] p.ª q venha no no 12 – conhecim.to da Moeda, q por Ca Corre, q Com isso Não pertendo Molestar ao P. Vellozo 13 – Cujos Annos, e experiencia Nesta Matr.ª venero m.to, pois Não Cabe Mais Na</p>
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⁷ In this case, the symbol seems to function as a parenthesis, so that the sentence would read as: “the chickens (he treats them with affection).”

demanded of his	
14 – ability because of age and ailments. And I have gotten along well with him	14 – Sua possibili.de por Rezão dos Annos, e achaques. E eu Me tenho dado bem com elle
15 – and received many favors from him [...]. Now I go seeing whether I can arrange it so that when he gives or receives	15 – e Recebido delles m.tos favores [&.] Agora ando vendo, se posso acabar com elle, q' qd.º der, ou Receber di=
16 – money, it be in my presence, for since he does not see, they could easily deceive him, for he calls a slave	16 – nheiro Seja em m.ª prez.ª por q como não ve facilm.te o enganarão, pois chama Hum Negro
17 – to count it for him in secret. The sardines that arrived could not have come at a better time, for	17 – p.ª lho contar as escondidas. As Sardinhas, q vierão Não podião em Melhor occazião, por q
18 – since there is no dried–fish oil, in its place a sardine is given until	18 – Como não há balea, em Lugar della Se vai dando huá Sard.ª athe aonde chagarem
19 – those that may come can reach us; the flour that came is little for the twenty sick we have in	19 – aq.las Mais poderem vir, melhor, a far.ª q veyo he pouca p.ª 20 doentes q temos na
20 – the infirmary, who are few, and it would be well if a larger portion came, as before	20 – enfermaria, qd.º São poucos, e bem fora q viesse mayor porção della, Como dantes vi=
21 – it used to come to cover some necessities, for if once in a long while we eat	21 – nha p.ª Nos abranger alguá couza, pois Se alguá vez de tempos em tempos co=
22 – a small piece of bacon, it is worth its weight in gold. If ships from Lisbon come, let them not forget	22 – memos Hú bocado [depeo] he a pezo de ouro, Se vierem Naos de L.ca não se esqueçaõ
23 – us, who have nothing except what comes from there, for the land has such hunger	23 – de nos, q Não temos Mais, q o q de Lá Vem, pois a terra tem tanta fome
24 – that it produces not even fruit. I will trouble Your Reverence no more. I ask the Holy Blessing	24 – q nem frutas produz. Não Molesto mais a V R.ª Peço a S.ta Benção
25 – and the Holy Sacrifice [...]. Sergipe, 10 June 1735.	25 – e S.to Sacrif.º [&.] Sergipe 10 de Junho de 1735
26 – Of Your Reverence	26 – D V.Rª
27 – Most humble and obliged servant	27 – M.º Hum.e e Obrig.º Subd.º
28 – Luís da Rocha.	28 – Luís da Rocha.
[Left-side note after closing the letter.]	[Anotação à esquerda após fechar a carta.]
01 – Regarding the provisions, I speak	01 – No q' Resp.ª aos provim.tos falo
02 – at greater length to Brother Soares	02 – mais estenso no Ir Soares
03 – to communicate it to Your Reverence.	03 – p.ª o Comunicar a VR.ª
[Left-side vertical note.]	[Anotação vertical à esquerda]
01 – Father Luís da Rocha having come	01 – P. Luis da Rocha vinda
02 – in the fleet in October 1735.	02 – na frota Em 8.bro de 1735.

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