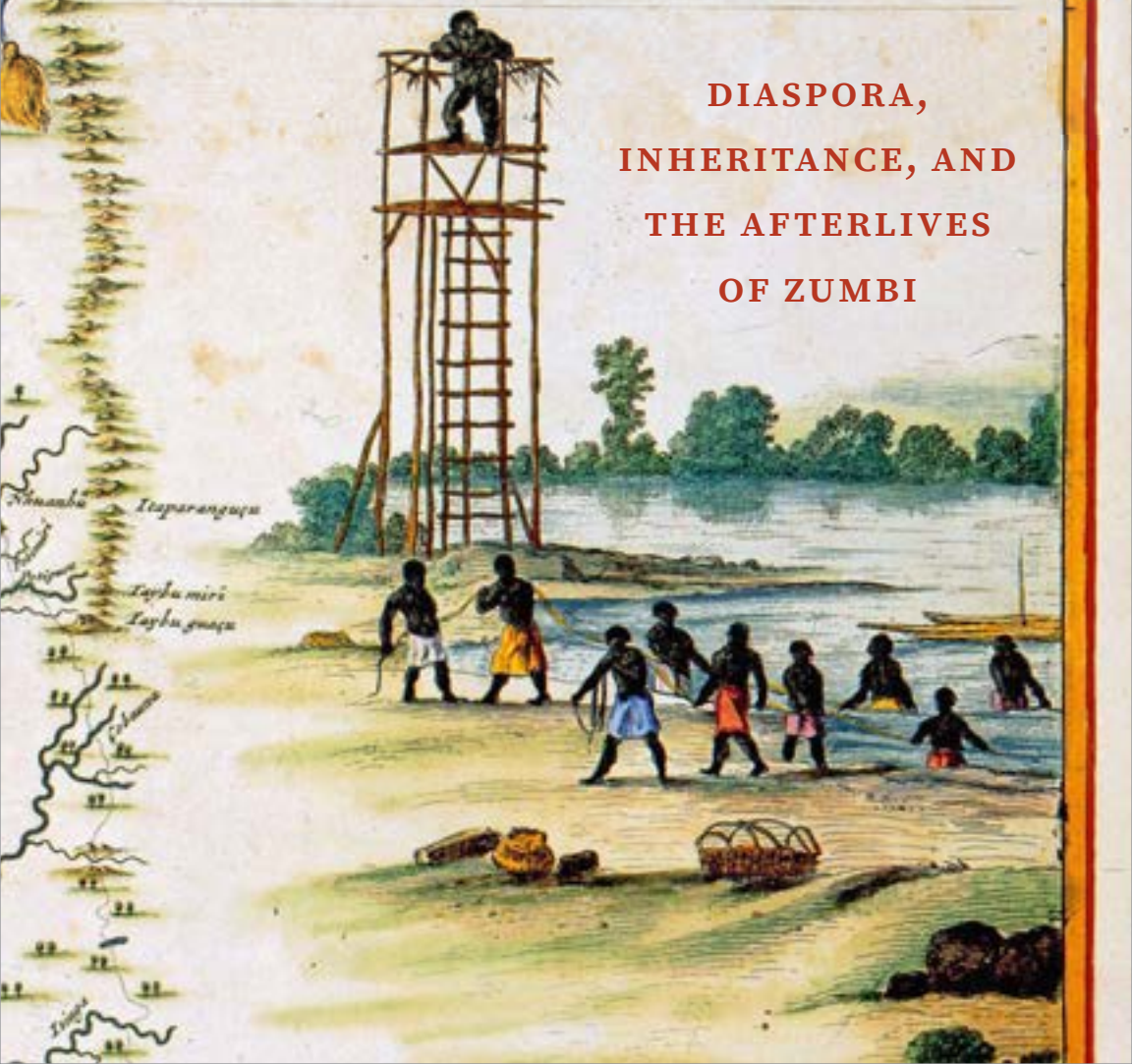
AFTER PALMARES

Marc A. Hertzman

DIASPORA, INHERITANCE, AND THE AFTERLIVES OF ZUMBI



AFTER PALMARES

AFTER

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PALMARES

DIASPORA, INHERITANCE, AND THE AFTERLIVES OF ZUMBI

· Marc A. Hertzman

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For Ikuko and Kai

Perhaps the earth can teach us
as when everything seems dead
and later proves to be alive.

—PABLO NERUDA, "KEEPING QUIET"

A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer,
it sings because it has a song.

—MULTIPLE AUTHORS

CONTENTS

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A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

Black rebels. Fugitives. Mocambos and quilombos. These are among the many labels that have been used for four centuries to refer to the place known as Palmares and the people who lived there. Each word has a backstory. Though their multiple and changing meanings are discussed in the chapters that follow, a few words about the conventions I use are in order here. Portuguese colonial officials who wrote many of the documents used in this book often referred to the people of Palmares (or "Palmar") as *negros* or pretos. Both words may be translated into English as "Black," though racial categories in Brazil are more numerous and often different than in the United States. Today, the Brazilian census uses two primary categories to recognize people of African descent: preto and pardo. The dictionary definition of pardo is "between white and Black," and, to many, *negro* encompasses both preto and pardo.[1] In Brazil, as in the United States, racial labels have been hurled with venom toward people of African descent, who have reclaimed some terms—*negro*, for example—with pride.[2] The contested contemporary meanings of these words necessarily inform how we write about historical categories.

As Elise A. Mitchell notes, though "semantics" will not "solve" racism, it is at the same time paramount to address the fact that "racial grammars are always steeped in history and more political than they appear on the surface."[3] Historians seek to make sense of this and accurately render these terms while working with what Paulina Alberto aptly calls "the compromised, deficient, indeed toxic vocabularies bequeathed by legacies of racial slavery."[4] I strive to remain faithful to my sources and, when not quoting directly from them, attempt to reflect something approaching consensus among Brazilians who call themselves Afro-Brazilian (afro-brasileiro), African-descended

or Afro-descended (afrodescendente), Black (*negro* and preto), and, in some cases, pardo. Alongside these imperfect translations into English, I generally leave pardo untranslated and do the same with *mulato*, a term that also denotes racial mixture but, appearing regularly in historical documents, is used much less today.[5] These words are also gendered, and Portuguese often defaults to masculine, generally denoted by words ending in -o. I sometimes use "*negro/a*" and similar constructions to avoid that default and its many implications.

Branco/a, "white," also appears in my sources, though with less frequency, a telling absence that indicates how whiteness became increasingly normalized at the top of the racial ladder as the history of Palmares unfolded.[6] While the sources I use almost always identify Black, Indigenous, and mixed-race people as such, they just as often leave "white" unsaid. I use "European," "of European descent," and similar terms, though these are also imperfect choices, as there were, of course, many people in Europe who were not white. But even if imperfect, explicitly signaling whiteness helps account for the documentary silences that leave white lineage unremarked and naturalized. In doing so, I hope to provide insights about how whiteness and other racial categories were constructed and maintained. I also adopt what is becoming standard practice, employing "enslaved," rather than "slave," and "enslaver," rather than "master" or "owner," to reflect the processes and violence behind the creation and naturalization of these categories.[7] Most of the history discussed here took place in what are today Brazil and Angola, though the former did not become an independent nation until 1822 and the latter only in 1974. While the maps and descriptive material found in the following pages help delimit my areas of focus, as shorthand, I nonetheless use both names along with more specific ethnic, regional, and racial labels.[8]

My approach to terminology and language is inevitably shaped by my own identity. As a white, Jewish, male professor working at a university in the United States, I am an outsider many times over to the histories that animate this book. In attempting to tell a history that accounts for the long afterlives and violences of slavery and racism, I hope that awareness of my own privilege has helped me do some justice to the book's main protagonists: Africans and their descendants in Brazil. Like the vocabulary itself, the capitalization of racial categories presents

another set of imperfect options. I agonized over this and other related questions, ultimately deciding that while there are good arguments to not capitalize any racial category or to capitalize all of them, I opted to capitalize "Black," "Indigenous," and "Native" to recognize the importance and meaning that doing so can carry today. Capitalizing "white" runs the risk of negating the effect and importance of capitalizing "Black" and "Indigenous," while leaving it uncapitalized threatens to further normalize whiteness. Faced with this conundrum and mindful of my own identity, I do not capitalize "white."[9]

The capitalization and spelling of "Zumbi" are also consequential. When capitalized here, "Zumbi" refers to one of three things: Palmares's most famous leader; place-names of lakes, rivers, streams, and small towns; and, on several occasions, a saintlike deity. When left uncapitalized, the word has multivalent meanings discussed over the course of the book, most notably a flying spirit of the dead and a deserted or isolated place. In some instances, the relationship between the meanings of big-Z Zumbi and little-z zumbi is unclear, and to reflect this I often employ a hybrid: Z/zumbi. Portuguese renderings of Z/zumbi varied in terms of not only capitalization, but also spelling. In many cases, it is difficult to discern whether colonial agents meant to refer to a distinct entity—Zambi, for example—or simply misunderstood or misrepresented African and diasporic creations and ideas. As I show, when referring to the Palmares leader, colonial officials used the letter /o/ more often than /u/, making "Zombi," not "Zumbi," the stated target of their missives and military forays. This is likely the product of colonial Portuguese spelling conventions, which frequently made /o/ and /u/ interchangeable, though future research may reveal more about the origins and meanings of "Zombi" and its relationship to Zumbi and other words and figures from the diaspora (for example, the Haitian "Zombie").

After Palmares plunges into the many manifestations and renderings of Z/zumbi, intent on thinking through what they may tell us about Palmares, diaspora, slavery, colonialism, and the afterlives of each. Though I generally employ what is now the standardized form (Zumbi), when directly quoting sources, I honor the original language (Zumby, Zombi, and other variations). A large number of documents from the seventeenth century have been transcribed, and while I use

many of these, as we will see, some transcription errors have distorted and invented meanings, and so, as often as possible, I consulted originals alongside the transcriptions. When there are discrepancies or when it is otherwise meaningful to do so, I cite both the transcription and original source. Otherwise, I cite whichever version I consulted most.

While attempting to think about history from the perspectives of those who lived in Palmares, I follow the current consensus to refer to those people as Palmaristas. Though the label appears in some colonial sources, it is an approximation.[10] Most often, the people who wanted to destroy Palmares called its denizens "the Blacks of Palmares"—"*os negros* [or 'os pretos'] dos Palmares"—or "os *negros* levantados [or 'alevantados'] dos Palmares," a phrase that may be loosely translated as "the rebel Blacks of Palmares" or "the Black insurgents of Palmares." The verb levantar (and alevantar), which the adjective (a)levantado comes from, means to rise or raise up, suggesting an active state of rebellion and uprising. "Black rebels" and "insurgents" seem to be the best, if not entirely adequate, options in English to represent these meanings. As noted, it can also be confounding to label the would-be destroyers of Palmares. Though I generally use "Portuguese," "Dutch," "European," or "colonial," the armies sent to attack Palmares comprised Black, Indigenous, white, and mixed-race soldiers and officers, whose relationship to the European crowns attempting to colonize the Americas varied greatly.

In the English-language scholarship, it is common to use "fugitive" and "maroon" to refer to people who escaped slavery. The word "maroon" (and the act of marronage) comes from the Spanish word "cimarrón," which, Gabriel de Avilez Rocha writes, is itself "a Castilian neologism of the early colonial era, forced into the language through the strength of Native and Black insurrection."[11] The actions and characteristics most often associated with maroon communities—namely, flight from and resistance to slavery—are addressed over the course of the book, as are the meanings of mocambo and quilombo, multifaceted words whose most common meanings are roughly synonymous with "maroon settlement," "maroon community," or "maroon society." While I use these terms (and "maroon" and "fugitive"), I do so uneasily because they have tended to lock our conversations into the struc-

tures of slavery and what is often taken for granted to be its opposite: freedom. The uncounted many who were born in Palmares, and those who escaped to Palmares, also surely harbored other thoughts and objectives. It can be difficult to balance this with the reality that European colonialism and slavery nonetheless shaped their existence in undeniable ways, and I often revert to the terms used in the documents, though I hope that my discussion of language and linguistics throughout the text adds additional views and perspectives.

To simplify without losing sight of complexities, when directly quoting sources, I preserve original spellings and elsewhere employ the following practices. Some scholars assert that the names of several Palmares leaders began with "Gana" (a West Central African word for the title "lord") and not "Ganga" (a "priest," spirit medium, or other kind of "expert"). As I show in chapter 3, this hypothesis overdraws the existing evidence and unnecessarily (if somewhat unintentionally) sidelines the religious and spiritual roles these leaders likely held. To reflect a more capacious approach that accounts for the indeterminacy of the written record and allows for the likelihood that both titles were used in Palmares, I employ a hybrid: "Gan(g)a." The relationship between "nzumbi" and "zumbi" is slightly different from that between "Ganga" and "Gana" and requires a different standard. While "Gana" and "Ganga" refer to distinct West Central African concepts—one that historians of Palmares have elevated while discounting the other—the relationship between "nzumbi" and "zumbi" derives from sound changes and spelling rules. Portuguese ears were not always attuned to all the sounds used in Bantuphone languages. For example, Europeans often heard and rendered /ng/ and /nz/ simply as /g/ or /z/, contributing to an unwieldy collection of orthographies that was complicated further by unevenness and changes in Portuguese spelling norms. In Portuguese documents, West Central African spirits of the dead called nzumbi are frequently written as "zumbi," a reflection of the way that /nz/ sounds in Bantu languages that were often heard and written down as /z/ by the Portuguese. Though "zumbi" took on new meanings over time in Africa and especially in Brazil, for the most part, the difference between "nzumbi" and "zumbi" reflects this somewhat mundane fact. (The same is true for "nzambi" and "zambi.")

Accordingly, and also because scholars have not explicitly dismissed "nzumbi" in the same way that some have dismissed "Ganga," I employ "zumbi" and "nzumbi" and only rarely use "(n)zumbi."

At various points in the text, I use comparative historical linguistics to discuss reconstructed word roots, which are depicted with an asterisk followed by a dash (*-), for example, **-dùmb,* for the proto-Bantu verb root "to rain." Following the standard practice in the field, the asterisk indicates that the word or root has been reconstructed, and the dashes show that additional morphemes (prefixes, suffixes, etc.) may be added to the root. Much like in English, where "hunt" can become "hunted" or "hunter," the same is true for the Bantuphone roots discussed here, and so the verb root **-dùmb-* becomes **-dùmbí,* a reconstructed noun for "rain." I discuss this methodology in more depth in appendix A. Throughout the book, I use the following characters to represent the seven-vowel proto-Bantu system: i ɪ e a o ʊ u.

Portuguese orthographic conventions varied during the colonial era and have changed multiple times since. This creates multiple challenges, including the case of authors whose names appear with multiple spellings. For clarity and consistency, I adopt contemporary rules for most authors' names. For example, I spell the eighteenth-century writer Sebastião da Rocha Pita's name as it would appear today, instead of as "Rocha Pitta," as it was often written while he was alive. I use the same approach for individuals who did not leave behind writing of their own, using "Manuel," for example, instead of "Manoel." I deviate from this usage in direct quotations and when citing and referring to historical documents, whose titles I render using the spellings, accents, and capitalizations as they appear in the original—preserving, for example, the title of Rocha Pita's 1730 book *Historia da America Portugueza* (which, using today's rules would be *História da América Portuguesa*).[12]

CHRONOLOGY

THROUGH THE DEATH OF ZUMBI (NOVEMBER 20, 1695)

1413	Portuguese voyages down Africa's Atlantic coast begin.
1483	The Portuguese arrive in West Central Africa.
1500	The Portuguese arrive in South America. Over the next century, European colonization in what will become northeast Brazil proceeds slowly. As enslaved Africans arrive on European ships, those who escape slavery form the first fugitive settlements in the area.
ca. 1600–1630s	The first of three major eras in Palmares occurs. There are few documentary sources about this period, but African settlements grew during this period, which also saw violent campaigns directed against them, marking the beginning of what is referred to in this book as the Palmares wars.
1602	A Portuguese colonizer arrives in the area that will become the Santo Amaro aldeia, bringing with him Indigenous people from the coast.
1603	The first written reference to "rebel Blacks" in Pernambuco.
1630	The twenty-four-year Dutch occupation of northeast Brazil begins.
1640s–ca. 1680	The second major era of Palmares occurs, characterized by regular cycles of Dutch and Portuguese assaults on Palmares; during this time the written record provides

evidence of a large network of mocambos named for individual leaders.

1641 The seven-year Dutch occupation of parts of Angola begins.

1645 On March 21, an unnamed Palmares woman is murdered by a Dutch bugler.

1648 The Dutch occupation in Angola ends.

1651 The first phase of the so-called War of the Barbarians (Guerra dos Bárbaros) begins in Bahia.

1654 The Dutch occupation of northeast Brazil ends.

1670s Written sources emerge of mocambos with leadership controlled by either family lineage or political succession. Gan(g)a Zumba is Palmares's most powerful leader, and Macaco is the dominant mocambo.

1678 Gan(g)a Zumba and Pernambuco's governor, Aires de Sousa de Castro, negotiate a peace accord.

1679–80 The accord fails, the leader known as Zumbi is at large, and Gan(g)a Zumba dies, with word spreading that he has been assassinated.

ca. 1680–95 The third major era of Palmares occurs. Zumbi is the most powerful and visible leader, and Serra da Barriga is the dominant settlement in Palmares. Its destruction in 1694 and his death in 1695 signal the formal end of the Palmares wars.

ca. 1681 Pedro Soeiro and other Palmares prisoners are in Portugal.

1682 The Portuguese Crown issues a decree regarding "the freedom, slavery, and punishment of the Blacks of Palmares."

1687 Domingos Jorge Velho is contracted to lead colonial efforts to destroy Palmares.

1687 The Guerra do Açu (the second, crucial, phase of the so-called War of the Barbarians) begins.

1694 In February, colonial forces defeat Palmaristas at Serra da Barriga, effectively ending the major military campaigns of the Palmares wars.

1693–95 Major discoveries of precious metals in Minas Gerais.

1695 On November 20, colonial forces kill Zumbi.

AFTER THE DEATH OF ZUMBI

1696–97 The governor of Pernambuco forces the people of Santo Amaro to resettle further into the Palmares backlands.

1697 Pedro Dias publishes *Arte da lingua de Angola*.

1700 After being temporarily relocated, the people of Santo Amaro return to their aldeia.

1700s–1720s A significant number of Inquisition cases in Angola reference (n)zumbi spirits.

1710–11 The Guerra dos Mascates (the Peddlers War).

1714 Colonial forces capture Mouza, believed to be the last surviving leader of a seventeenth-century Palmares mocambo.

ca. 1720 The Guerra do Açu concludes.

1727 The Portuguese Crown grants land in Palmares to an unnamed Indigenous sergeant major and other unnamed Indigenous combatants.

1728–95 During this time period, land grants mention Zumbi place-names in Paraíba.

1730s Rumors of Indigenous uprisings circulate in Paraíba and beyond.

1730 Sebastião da Rocha Pita publishes *Historia da America Portugueza*.

1731	A major battle occurs at Cumbi, a mocambo in Paraíba believed to have included members who formerly belonged to Palmares mocambos.
1746	The town council of Penedo (Alagoas) writes to the king of Portugal, requesting assistance against the "Indians of Palmar."
1756	Witchcraft charges are leveled against a West Central African man and West African woman in Minas Gerais for worshipping Zumbi and Saint Benedict.
1775	Portugal awards the final land grant connected to military service against Palmares.
1802	The Bishop of Olinda compares rebellious Indigenous people in Pernambuco to the Black rebels of Haiti.
1822	Brazil separates from Portugal, forming an independent monarchy.
1832–35	The Cabanada uprising shakes Pernambuco and Alagoas.
1850	The licit trade of enslaved Africans to Brazil formally ends.
	The Brazilian Land Law is passed.
1871	The Brazilian Free Womb Law is passed.
1884	Alfredo do Vale Cabral publishes his definitions of Z/zumbi and Zambi.
1885	Pedro Paulino da Fonseca publishes his "Posthumous Baptism" story.
1888	Slavery is abolished in Brazil.
1889	Brazil transforms its monarchy into a republic.
1904	Raimundo Nina Rodrigues publishes landmark essay on Palmares.
1963	Director Carlos Diegues's film *Ganga Zumba* debuts.

1964 The military seizes control of Brazil, beginning a twenty-one-year dictatorship.

1965 Luís da Câmara Cascudo pronounces zumbi dead in Angola.

1971 Grupo Palmares begins to observe November 20 as a singular day in Black history.

1984 Director Carlos Diegues's film *Quilombo* debuts.

1985 The military relinquishes control of Brazil.

1988 Article 68 in Brazil's new constitution guarantees rights to federally recognized quilombo communities.

Serra da Barriga is declared a national monument.

The Fundação Cultural Palmares (FCP) is created.

1995 Commemorations are held on the tricentennial of Zumbi's death.

1996 Zumbi is included in Brazil's *Livro dos Heróis e Heroínas da Pátria* (Book of Heroes and Heroines of the Fatherland).

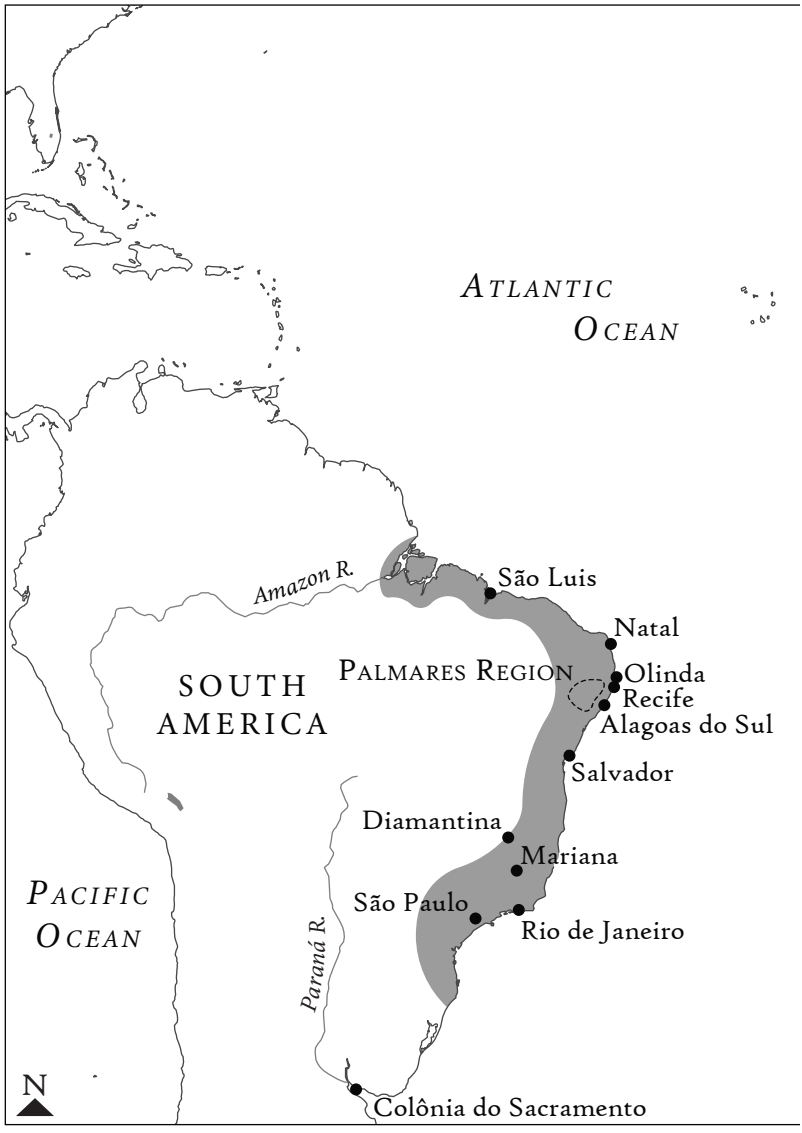
2007 The Parque Memorial Quilombo dos Palmares atop Serra da Barriga is created.

2011 Congress declares November 20 the National Day of Zumbi and Black Consciousness.

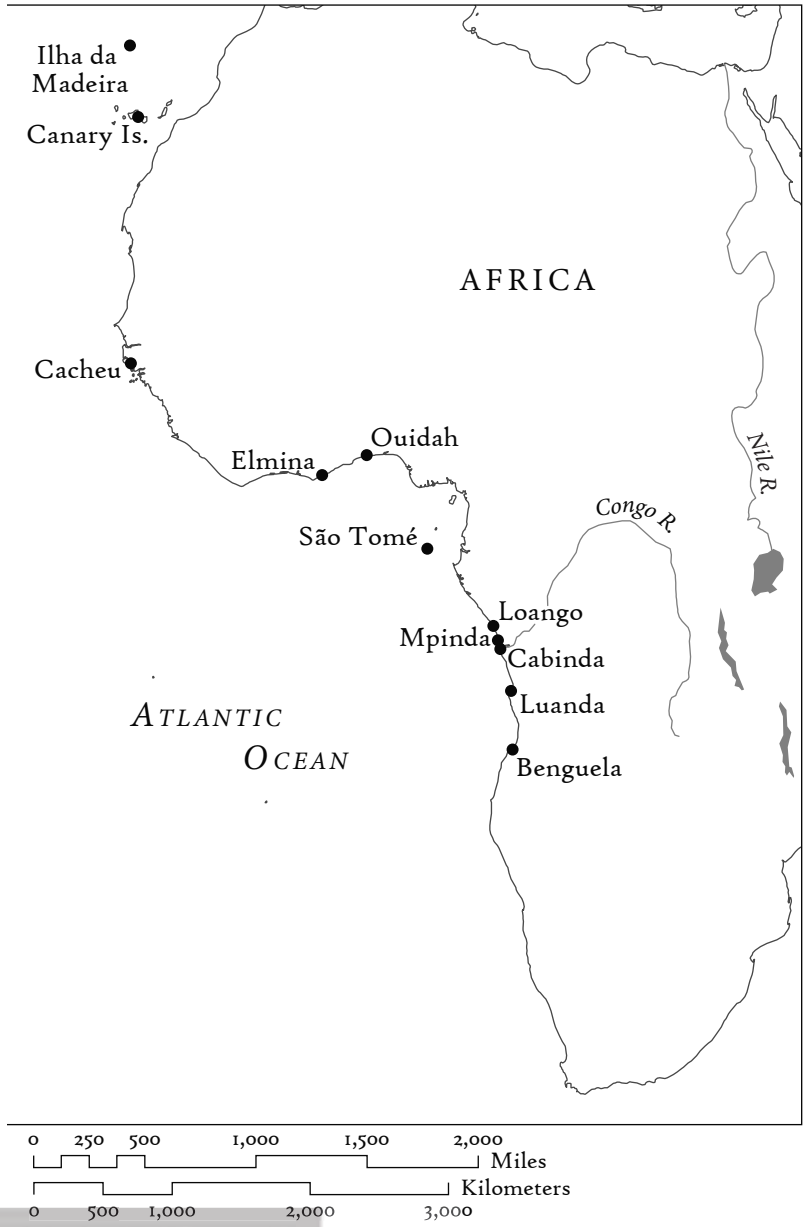
2013 Manuel Lopes's descendant Francisco Galvão publishes a blog describing himself as a relative of the man who killed Zumbi.

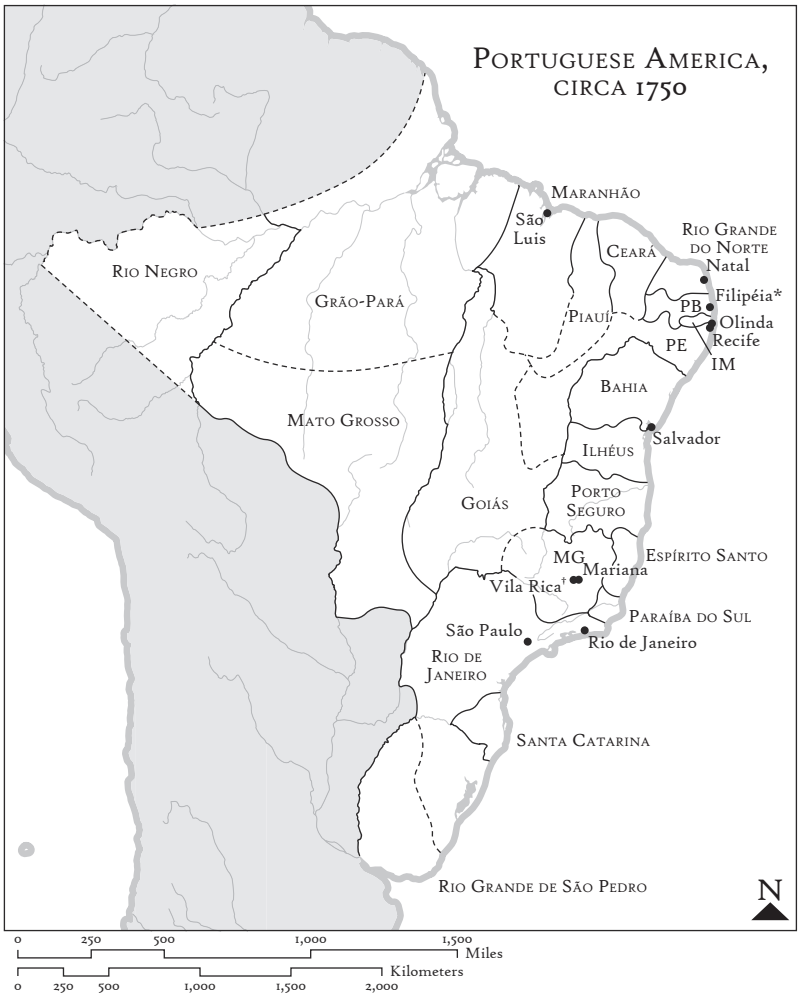
2019 President Jair Bolsonaro appoints Sérgio Camargo as director of the FCP.

2023 President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva appoints João Jorge Rodrigues as director of the FCP.



MAP FM.1 Portuguese America and the African Coast





* Filipéia de Nossa Senhora das Neves; would later become Cidade da Parahyba, and in 1930 take its current name, João Pessoa

† Now Ouro Preto

——— Established or undisputed borders

- - - - - - - Uncertain or disputed borders

Abbreviations:

IM Itamaracá
MG Minas Gerais
PB Paraíba
PE Pernambuco

MAP FM.2 Portuguese America, circa 1750

INTRODUCTION Layered Diasporas

The year 1695 holds great symbolic importance in Brazilian history. Though not quite as prominent as 1492 in Spanish and North America, or 1500, when Portugal "discovered" Brazil, 1695 represents a key turning point in the history of Portuguese America. That year, the recent discovery of precious metals in Minas Gerais reached a crescendo, launching Brazil's "Golden Age" and the promise of sparkling wealth to rival what Spain was extracting from its American colonies.[1] As the Portuguese plunged deeper inland in pursuit of riches, economic and political gravity shifted south, away from the captaincy of Pernambuco, a key slaving port in what would become northeast Brazil—and home to Palmares, one of the largest and longest-lasting maroon societies in the history of the Americas. The story of Palmares is also typically said to end in 1695—on November 20, to be precise—when colonial forces killed its most famous leader, Zumbi. Thanks to years of tireless work by Black activists, November 20 is now memorialized in Brazil as the National Day of Zumbi and Black Consciousness. Like 1492 and other iconic years, 1695 is a historical marker that is both illusory and impossible to ignore. It is impossible to ignore because a lot did change after 1695 but also illusory because while mining and the death of Zumbi facilitated important shifts, the histories behind both hallmarks did not simply or suddenly end. Enslaved and formerly enslaved people continued to arrive in, leave, and live and die in Pernambuco, and Palmares continued to play a significant role in colonial affairs. These simple facts confound neat chronologies.

Boundedness also often marks discussions of marronage. Though literature on the topic is rich, scholars tend to treat maroon communities—mocambos or quilombos in Brazil—as terminal locations, where histories of survival and defiance, however remarkable,

conclude.[2] While Palmares and other such settlements are rightfully understood as spaces of diasporic refuge and resistance, unless descendants can trace their lineage directly back to them, through land possession or genealogy, scholars implicitly define them as endpoints: formerly enslaved people either lived out their days there or were recaptured or killed. Though this perspective holds many truths, it is incomplete. This book travels across 1695, narrating histories that preceded and succeeded the fateful year, and advances a new framework that highlights the literal and figurative afterlives of Africans and their kin in Brazil, and in doing so it conceptualizes maroon settlements not only as destinations but also as points of origin, capable of generating new diasporas and novel forms of inheritance.

Beginning around the turn of the seventeenth century, Africans who escaped enslavement in Pernambuco found refuge in a large wilderness that soon came to be known as Palmares (or Palmar). For the next century, they created settlements whose extent and relationships to one another are not often clear in surviving documents. The mocambos changed over time, and some moved because of environmental factors, agricultural practices, and military threats. Those who lived in Palmares (Palmaristas) numbered in the many thousands, and Palmares itself became a fixture in the landscape, an autonomous territory, and, at least to the Europeans, a polity that had to be either crushed or brought to heal through political negotiation. The mocambos were (and are) indelibly associated with palm trees; in Portuguese, "palmar" means a collection of palm trees (palmeiras) or even a "town or hut in the middle of a palm grove."[3] But though many of the mocambos were indeed hidden among the region's ubiquitous palm trees, the settlements, the terrain that surrounded them, and the trees themselves were diverse, a multiplicity indicative of the many storylines that lie behind the more well-known histories and images of Palmares—and which are the subject of this book.

Made by Africans and their children, the mocambos of Palmares were magnets for refugees and at the same time capable of propelling outcasts, survivors of war, prisoners, and spirits of the dead to new destinations. In short, Palmares was created by diaspora and also created diaspora. The fates and trajectories of the people of Palmares were entangled with those of the white, Black, Indigenous, and mixed-race soldiers who assaulted Palmares and then traveled to new places, taking war stories and in some cases prisoners with them. The human and spiritual trajectories fueled by these processes produced overlapping, layered diasporas that invite fuller examination. For

all the symbolic value that Palmares and Zumbi retain, researchers know little about their legacies in the century following Zumbi's demise. Aside from a handful of now-canonical eighteenth-century histories written by white men of privilege, the century following Zumbi's death appears to be a chasm, bracketed by a comparative wealth of documentary sources from the seventeenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries.[4] *After Palmares* looks into and beyond the eighteenth century, bringing into view new narratives, geographies, and forms of inheritance that blur the line between worlds of the living and the dead. In African and Afro-Brazilian religious beliefs and practices, place-names, oral traditions, and colonial documents, memories of Zumbi and Palmares survived in multiple forms in the aftermath of 1695, including in toponyms for the natural landscape and through ancestor spirits that transcend human mortality.

Though there is a great deal of work on Palmares in Portuguese (if drastically less in English), many of the questions that have framed the literature are somewhat narrow: Who came to the mocambos? What were their identities? What kind of "state" or "kingdom" was Palmares?[5] These are important topics, but they are asked almost entirely in the past tense. Too few questions have been crafted about the future—about those who survived and were taken prisoner, or about what became of those whom the dead left behind, not to mention the Palmaristas who, by choice or force, themselves left Palmares behind. Now, in addition to asking who and what made Palmares, we may also ask: What did Palmares make?

Thinking about Palmares as not only a terminus but also a starting point has far-reaching implications for both the histories of Palmares, Brazil, the African Diaspora, and marronage and also contemporary debates about slavery and reparations. In 1988, Brazil adopted a new constitution as it emerged from a military dictatorship that had seized control of the nation in 1964. Article 68 guaranteed rights to Black quilombo communities, though only in vague terms. Revised and expanded in 2003, the provision recognizes communities that can prove historical land possession and trace descendance from groups who suffered and resisted racial oppression.[6] Though not explicitly conceptualized as such, the rules represent a small form of reparations for slavery—which ended later than in any other nation in the Americas, in 1888—and may serve as a reference point in conversations in the United States. But while Article 68 signaled an important victory, there exist today many communities that for any number of reasons do not meet the categories and regulations to

gain official recognition, and even those that do have rarely found legal protection to be a panacea.[7] There are also millions of Brazilians whose lineage passes through enslavement and traces to Africa who do not live in quilombo communities, and the very categories "quilombo" and "quilombola" (member of a quilombo community) remain debated and contested.[8] Palmares represents both the great potential and limits to the federal quilombo project; the many creations and inheritances forged in and that passed through Palmares are collectively incongruous, fragmented, and dispersed. The numerous and expansive paths they traveled—tangled, chaotic, and uneven—demonstrate the need for a broader and fuller account of the legacies, inheritances, and debts owed for slavery that elude even the important provision codified in 1988.

To reckon with those legacies, inheritances, and debts, and to tell the history of Palmares and its afterlives, this book begins with a chapter that takes the reader into Palmares by way of an event—the death of a female Palmarista—that has received little mention. This starting point not only draws attention to archival absences and silences, but also demands that we ask new questions and seek out sources and methodologies that have been overlooked or underused. Those questions, sources, and methodologies unfold in the book's five thematic parts. The first four—"War and Conquest," "Spirits," "People," and "Places"—focus primarily on the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries with some glimpses into later moments. Death, afterlives, and rebirths are explored throughout the book and brought to the fore in the final part, "Deaths and Rebirths," which traces several of the main pathways along which Palmares and Zumbi became contested symbols of national identity during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Here we also see how Palmares was capable of not only generating and creating but also erasing and denying.

To write this history, I grounded my work in archival research, oral and environmental history, and comparative historical linguistics, while also availing myself of a powerful collection of digital archives.[9] In addition to a large collection of colonial records, Brazil's National Library (Biblioteca Nacional, BN) has digitized its enormous collection of newspapers, an incredible resource that can also be disorienting. For example, its search engine finds 1,668 instances of "zumbi" in a single newspaper from Manaus, thousands of miles away from where Palmares once stood.[10] Some are false hits (words that the site mistakes for "zumbi"), others refer to places named Zumbi, and many duplicate narratives about Palmares or are reprints of advertisements

involving Zumbi place-names. The mountains of digital "hits," many unmoored from any direct connection to Palmares, represent a certain symmetry to the anonymous data points that count the number of enslaved people forcibly carried across the Atlantic and are now accessible at the click of a mouse. They also underscore the challenge of representing a focused history that is faithful to a seemingly endless number of plots.

Digital sources, especially the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade database (TST, housed on the Slave Voyages website), have revolutionized our understanding of how many people enslavers had forced onto ships in Africa, and where in Africa the ships departed from before arriving in America.[11] Overwhelmingly, during the era of Palmares, those arriving in Pernambuco came from West Central Africa. For these men, women, and children, home was somewhere in what the Portuguese called the "Kingdom of Angola," or what today covers more than half of Angola, the greater part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, much of the southern part of the Republic of Congo, and parts of northwest Zambia.[12] Within the region, we know a great deal about individual societies and places, ranging from Benguela in the South to Kongo (and beyond) in the north.[13] This region was central to the formation of Pernambuco, though there are massive gaps in scholarly knowledge about connections between the two areas. Though Pernambuco received enslaved captives almost continuously from the mid-sixteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries and became one of the most important sugar-producing regions in the world, historians still "know less about the slave trade to Pernambuco than about any other major branch of the traffic."[14] Data is "incomplete or nonexistent" from 1655 and 1719, years that overlap with Palmares's heyday, the life and death of Zumbi, and the immediate aftermath of 1695, but scholars have found other ways to address the absence.[15]

Numbers and demographics can anchor us and provide clarity about some aspects of the past, such as the broader points of origin that we think most Palmaristas came from. If taken as suggestion and with an awareness of how much is missing, numbers may also propel us forward by prompting us to ask what lay beyond 1695. While I use the numbers and demographic information that have been compiled by the TST creators and contributors alongside my own estimates of prisoners taken in Palmares, I do so not only to understand origins but also to think forward in time, to consider not only where Palmaristas came from, but also what became of them. The "data" for this work is more impenetrable than the already opaque material found in

ship logs, which often hides names, gender, and other details. Reports about Palmares prisoners taken during battle are stingier still, often refusing even to part with numbers, offering nothing more than "many" or other hopelessly vague descriptors. The cautious estimates that I draw from this material are faceless and nameless, and important precisely because of that. One of my primary intentions in making them is to center the people who built, lived in, died in, and fled Palmares, those whose names we do not know and whose lives and deaths did not even merit register in the life-draining counts of battlefield deaths—the lives captured and hidden in lifeless adjectives such as "many."

Though stingy, the colonial archive, especially when read alongside other sources, offers insights about gender and sexuality, a topic that has received little attention in Palmares. Work by historians in other areas of the diaspora helps point the way. Discussing insurgency among the enslaved in Cuba, Aisha Finch shows "how deeply masculinity and male embodiment have structured the way in which we think about black opposition."[16] This is especially true for Palmares and Zumbi, who became almost a prototype of masculine Black rebellion, though there is now a female counterpart, Dandara, a fictionalized figure known to some as Zumbi's wife, who fought and died by his side. Though she is a literary creation, or a popular legend who gained greater notoriety through a novel, Dandara continues to hold great power and symbolism.[17] Finch also points out "that certain *actions*—as much if not more than certain *people*—became masculinized during moments of rebellion."[18] Colonial documents and latter-day accounts of Palmares highlighted the bravery of male fighters, generally only mentioning female Palmaristas as they were taken prisoner. But we know that women controlled mocambos within Palmares, and there is little doubt that some participated in combat and other tactical exercises often categorized as male. More importantly, we will see that behind iconic stories of male Palmares warriors lies a rich collection of other histories and afterlives, some made more visible through lenses trained on the post-1695 era.

War and Conquest

Warfare and the European quest to conquer Palmares help periodize its history, even while disrupting other chronologies. Chapter 1 begins on a forgotten day in 1645, an unconventional entry point into Palmares meant to beckon

toward the many unknown aspects of its history. From the late sixteenth century through the Dutch occupation of northeast Brazil (1630–54), Palmares developed in spurts, with the creation of an unknown number of mocambos. In the 1660s, the kingdom of Kongo plunged into civil war, thanks in part to agitation and funding provided by Pernambuco's governor, André Vidal de Negreiros.[19] Warfare in West Central Africa helped speed the transfer of captured men, women, and children to Brazil. Meanwhile, the Portuguese trained a vicious wave of attacks on Palmares leading up to a short-lived peace treaty in 1678. During this time, details about the names of individual mocambo leaders emerge in surviving documents. The peace accord, signed by the Palmares leader Gan(g)a Zumba and Aires de Sousa de Castro, the governor of Pernambuco, did not last long. Rivals assassinated Gan(g)a Zumba and the area descended once again into violence. Over the next decade and a half, Zumbi consolidated power and held off the Portuguese until his death.

During the 1670s, Palmares was organized in a network of mocambos, each likely under the control of a single leader, whose place was secured and preserved either through lineal succession or political maneuvering. In the 1680s and 1690s, under Zumbi, Palmares was centered atop the mountain called Serra da Barriga (in colonial documents, also "Serra do Barriga" and "Outeiro da [or do] Barriga"). Though Palmares fell after Zumbi's death, which followed a bruising battle at Serra da Barriga in 1694, the defeat was incomplete, as Palmares remained a site of refuge for years to come. The post-Zumbi years saw dispersal, fragmentation, and rebirth, as surviving Palmaristas alighted to new locales and, in some cases, remained in Palmares, where, though dramatically fewer in number, colonial reports of mocambos, fugitives, and insurgents nonetheless persisted for decades. The continued cycles of attacks that the Europeans leveled against the mocambos may be understood as a series of loosely connected military conflicts waged over the course of a century: the Palmares wars.[20] The violence trained against Palmares engendered subsequent forms of violence as well as wealth and at least the dream of social ascension for Black, white, Indigenous, and mixed-race soldiers who attacked, killed, wounded, and placed their own lives at risk in exchange for material gains that some secured more easily than others, and which could generate new forms of wealth, security, and historical notoriety.

Like the Spanish conquest, Portugal's defeat of Palmares generated triumphant written accounts. Sebastião da Rocha Pita, a Brazilian-born writer of Portuguese descent who helped formalize the study of history in Brazil, penned

a foundational account of Palmares and Zumbi in his famous 1730 tract *Historia da America Portugueza* (*History of Portuguese America*), a book that one observer in 1922 called "possibly the most important historical production of the colonial period in Brazil."[21] Palmares began, Rocha Pita explained, when a small group of Africans escaped bondage and founded their own society. Eventually, it took on characteristics of the world's great ancient civilizations. Unburdened by the "speculation of Aristotle and Plato in their written republics, or the laws promulgated in Athens," Palmares was both comparable to and distinct from classical societies.[22] In conjuring ancient Greece, Rocha Pita tapped into an obsession among the chroniclers of colonial America with what might be called the "savage civilization slot"—a pre-conquest people and society that was at once marvelous and barbaric.[23] Explorers and writers across the Americas searched for, wrote about, and in many senses created and imagined primitive pasts fit for admiration if not wholesale embrace.[24]

Works like Rocha Pita's often replicated and also embellished language and accounts found in petitions and other official communications that soldiers and officers used to relate battlefield exploits and seek reward, blurring the lines between fact and fiction. In no case is this clearer than the iconic, tragic moment of Zumbi's death. Beginning with Rocha Pita, some of Brazil's foundational historical texts maintained that, when the Portuguese finally cornered him, Zumbi leaped off a cliff, killing himself rather than facing capture and enslavement. This apocryphal story was based on hazy accounts of a moment on a darkened battlefield, when scores of Palmaristas, though not Zumbi, leaped or fell from a cliff. Plumbing the gaps and connections between soldiers' accounts and published texts reveals the material stakes behind the narratives, evident especially in the way that rumors of Zumbi's demise circulated years before his death, as soldiers sought monetary awards for killing him. In Gabriel García Márquez's famous novel *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, members of an entire village learn one by one that the central character will be killed, even while he remains unaware.[25] During the final two decades of intense fighting in Palmares, colonial agents foretold death in a different way, repeatedly seeking rewards based in claims that they had killed Zumbi, who in fact continued to survive despite the immense efforts and resources dedicated to defeating and killing him.

Reading Palmares through the lens of war and conquest also raises an unusual chronological question: How did it come to pass, and what does it even mean, for Portugal to have conquered in the Americas an African society

whose very existence came about through the transatlantic slave trade? In the Americas, the very idea of conquest depends on a prescribed order: Europeans invade America and defeat the inhabitants. That Africans and their kin established a place large and formidable enough that Europeans set out to conquer it—and that doing so took a century to complete—speaks to the mocambos' size and strength and illustrates the need to think more fully about the unique aspects of this particular conquest. Over the last four decades, as historians dismantled previous accounts of Europeans steamrolling their way to victory over Indigenous people in the Americas, thanks to a combination of military might, disease, and Native passivity, they have come to understand conquest as a word and idea that hides and distorts a great number of subtleties and counternarratives, including the role of Indigenous alliances and divisions. Crucially, scholars have also radically revised our understanding of 1492 and the dates that mark the defeat of the Aztec, Inca, and other Indigenous people. Far from signaling erasure of what came before, scholars now take 1492, 1521, 1532, and other luminous dates to be conduits—key moments of transition, to be sure, but not endpoints.[26]

In the case of Palmares, conquest may be understood, at least in part, as a narrative tool that mainly benefited Europeans but could also be meaningful and potent for others. Like any conquest, this one required an outlay of capital to fund troops and also generated wealth for the most decorated and well-connected soldiers and officers, including nonwhite combatants, whose trajectories offer suggestive points of comparison with Black and Indigenous conquistadors from Spanish America.[27] The post-Palmares journeys of colonial combatants through Brazil and beyond reveal a complex interplay between diaspora and conquest. As soldiers journeyed beyond Palmares, they parlayed stories of their exploits, including false boasts of killing Zumbi, into monetary awards, which they passed on to heirs. While Palmares's destroyers and their descendants gained wealth and social power, the descendants of Palmares's inhabitants faded from view, at least in the documentary record.

Spirits

After killing Zumbi, colonial soldiers delivered his head to the new governor of Pernambuco, Caetano de Melo de Castro, who ordered that it be displayed "on a stake in the most public place" in Recife, an act meant "to mollify the

offended and justly querulous and to terrorize the Blacks who superstitiously view Zumbi to be immortal, and to make clear that in this undertaking Palmares has been destroyed once and for all."[28] What Castro called superstition was in fact a complex set of religious beliefs organized around understandings of a relationship between the worlds of the living and the dead that were much more fluid than the terms used by the governor.

Palmaristas looked to the worlds of the living and the dead as they confronted challenges and obstacles. For most Palmaristas, religion was politics—a means for controlling spirits that determined life, death, and the environment's capacity to provide sustenance.[29] Their spiritual beliefs have received little attention for reasons similar to those that elsewhere segregate politics and spirits in historical analysis.[30] If those who considered Zumbi to be immortal understood that he took different form after 1695, many likely believed that form to be a West Central African flying spirit of the dead known as nzumbi, eventually known in Brazil as zumbi. During the nineteenth century, Black women who labored as caregivers for white children in Brazil told them stories that suggested that the man (Zumbi) and the spirit (zumbi) could be one and the same. Later, as the children became adults and established themselves as scholars, they used those stories to catalog meanings of Z/zumbi, while at the same time rejecting what the women had said earlier and disaggregating big-Z Zumbi and little-z zumbi. Alongside these later renderings, the voices of those Black women suggest a crucial way that Z/zumbi lived on after 1695.

Spiritual beliefs were shaped in the corridor connecting Brazil and Angola, which Roquinaldo Ferreira conceptualizes "not as two geographical places separated by an ocean, but as one social and cultural continuum connected by an ocean."[31] If humans, goods, and ideas traveled across the Atlantic as if on a highway, souls must have journeyed in even more complex and connected ways, further blurring distinctions between the living and the dead, and between Africa and America. While some spirits were moored in Africa, others emanated from new homelands in Brazil. For surviving Palmaristas confronting the aftermath of 1695, returning "home" might not mean (only) crossing the Atlantic, as the act is often conceptualized in literature on the diaspora, but instead (or also) involve a return to Palmares or other similarly generative American sites.

People

The afterlives of Z/zumbi and Palmares circulated not only via spirits but also through the almost entirely unexamined diaspora of those who survived the mocambos' destruction. Exploring multiple meanings of Z/zumbi at once reinforces the centrality of the leader (or leaders) who went by that name and suggests a larger universe of expression that extends far beyond any single individual. In the last century, scholars have compiled a massive archive of colonial engagement with Palmares. What began during the first half of the twentieth century, with authors such as Ernesto Ennes and Edison Carneiro publishing transcriptions of colonial communiqués, grew in the second half, as Décio Freitas and others did the same.[32] In the first decades of the twenty-first century, Flávio Gomes followed in their footsteps while blazing new trails, compiling a trove of documents along with a set of insightful, critical essays.[33] Most recently, Silvia Lara published an exhaustively researched book about Palmares, coedited a critical edition of one of the most detailed contemporaneous sources on Palmares, and built Documenta Palmares, a website featuring the fruit of years of labor—thousands of pages of documents and an interactive map, all now accessible to researchers around the world.[34]

One of the main assumptions that undergirds work on Palmares is that even these impressive archives render inaccessible the lives and voices of all but the most powerful and important members of the mocambos. My book counters this by presenting remarkable individual portraits: a young girl born in Palmares, taken by colonial forces, and presented as a "gift" to an Indigenous colonial officer and his wife; a man captured in Palmares and sent to Portugal, where he worked for daily wages in the royal tobacco plant, contracted smallpox, and sought the patronage of a white military officer before dying; a woman whose mother was Indigenous and whose grandfather was a white conqueror, and who became the matriarch of a powerful family that settled land taken from the mocambos. I combine their stories with those of larger communities, such as the Indigenous people who battled for formal rights to land in Palmares after helping defeat it. Though they suffered brutal treatment, throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries these Indigenous people advocated for, and sometimes secured, property and rights by calling themselves "conquerors of Palmares."

Richard Price, a pioneer in the study of maroon societies, contrasted Palmares with settlements whose descendants live on the same land as their

ancestors and trace clear lineages across centuries.[35] It is true that few individuals or communities today trace descent from Palmares. Yet the absence of genealogical lineage does not mean a lack of historical connectivity. For that, we must consider those who were captured or fled, groups I discuss throughout part III and elsewhere in the book. Veterans of all kinds also play a central role in this story. Some embarked on far-flung journeys after 1695, carrying stories (and most likely captives) with them. To what degree is it possible to trace the African Diaspora through the paths traveled by those charged with enslaving or killing its members? This question is especially complex for Black and mixed-race officers and soldiers who fought against Palmares; they were part of the diaspora and also destroyers of one of its most monumental creations. The trajectories of colonial combatants demonstrate connections between the pre- and post-1695 eras and among seemingly distant dots on the Portuguese colonial map. They also suggest the need to expand the maps we typically use for Palmares and the directions that memories and meanings traveled along.

Places

For new insights, I also turn to the natural world with an approach encapsulated by the book's first epigraph, Pablo Neruda's poetic suggestion that the earth can demonstrate how what once "seems dead . . . later proves to be alive."[36] Marcus de Carvalho and Anna Laura Teixeira de França provide a useful starting point for bringing environmental history into our understanding of Palmares. In addition to the human and political stories, they write, "When we think about Palmares . . . we should also think about the forests, mountains, rivers, caves, caverns, rain, and sun."[37] Part IV, "Places," takes up this call by studying landscape, geography, and place-names in Pernambuco and also in surprising places that rarely appear in the literature on Palmares and languish on the margins of Brazilian historiography. Building on the work in part III about the Palmares diaspora, part IV explores in more detail some of the unexpected points to which Palmares survivors fled. Compared with that largely anonymous group, we know a good deal about the soldiers and officers whose names and exploits are registered in colonial archives. While some veterans remained close by after 1695, settling on the land formerly occupied by Palmares, others traveled to out-of-the way places such as Paraíba, Rio Grande do Norte, and much farther still: Rio de Janeiro, Angola, and Portugal.

An indication of how the topics highlighted in each part are intertwined throughout the book, my treatment of place depends on tracing the movement of people and extending my discussion of spiritual beliefs. Before the Portuguese killed Zumbi, Palmares had withstood assaults from two European empires (Portuguese and Dutch) almost since its inception. Its longevity would later lead observers (often steeped in racial essentialism and outright racism) to compare Palmares to Haiti. But unlike the Haitian Revolution or any other revolt, Palmares was not an event—it was a place, a collection of settlements occupying an area twice the length of Rhode Island and some fifteen kilometers wider.[38] The Palmares wilderness represented many things to the different parties it touched—a colonial frontier, menacing backlands, a place of refuge and sustenance, a site of deep spiritual power, and a vast space whose coordinates shifted and which included or bordered multiple topographies and microclimates that fostered lush, dense vegetation as well as arid, barren landscapes. And, as we will see, Palmares was not simply shaped by the colonial frontier but also helped generate, delimit, and make it.

African, African-diasporic, and Indigenous toponyms are found throughout Brazil. The meanings and the messages they conveyed and convey depend on context and could change over time. Read carefully alongside more traditional archival sources, unique insights are offered by place-names, the landscape, and the built environment about how slavery and colonial power were forged, asserted, and opposed.[39] In addition to diasporic ancestor spirits, the name Zumbi survived in toponyms—lakes, rivers, small towns, and neglected neighborhoods—many of which are, or once were, imbued with spiritual meanings. Each presents a unique opportunity to sharpen our understanding of Palmares, trace its post-1695 histories, and grasp how crucial those histories are to larger struggles over land, religion, memory, wealth, and power. For groups whose histories have not been recorded in writing, understanding how and why a place-name came into being, or what it meant to them, is sometimes possible through careful inference based in other sources. For some toponyms, it is possible to deduce likely paths from Palmares, while, for others, distinct origins are more likely. A special set of challenges arise when interpreting the numerous plantations (engenhos) called Engenho Zumbi or Engenho Mocambo, seemingly oxymoronic constructions that may signal a diasporic imprint on the landscape, white appropriation, or something in between. Far from a simple tale of survival or triumph, the history of place reveals

an uneven terrain that bequeathed different and unequal inheritances to those who lived and died on it.

Deaths and Rebirths

As the histories of place suggest, some of the most interesting stories emanating from Palmares pass through surprising locales. Part V, "Deaths and Rebirths," builds on this insight to also demonstrate how some histories previously associated with Palmares may, on further reflection, now direct us to think beyond Palmares—to other diasporic histories that the famous mocambos have obscured. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, writers inserted Palmares, especially descriptions of its destruction, into narratives to bolster nascent regional and national identities. As one of the most visible examples of African contributions to Brazil, Palmares became a go-to reference for scholars puzzling over words and ideas that were unfamiliar to them. Influential (mainly white and male) authors wrote about African words, including multiple definitions of Zumbi (and zumbi) in a way that helped preserve in print a wide range of meanings while also attempting to shape and narrow those meanings to their liking. While that process could be destructive, it also helped facilitate later waves of writing, reclamation, and activism, which elevated Palmares and Zumbi into more dynamic and unquestionably powerful symbols of Black identity and resistance. Traces of some of the memories and ideas that have been passed down orally are found in the written record, conveying a broad set of beliefs and ideas shaped by not only the circulation of written texts but also the diasporas of millions of Africans forcibly taken to Brazil during the slave era.

In some cases, the histories that emerge from this tangle of people and documents provide insights about Palmares and its uneven and unequal inheritances. For example, the final chapter describes how today in Rio Grande do Norte one man openly identifies as an heir to the colonial officer who killed Zumbi. But that officer did not, in fact, kill Zumbi, and the story, passed down over centuries, vividly illustrates the length and impact of the inheritances bequeathed by some Palmares conquerors. By contrast, the lineages of a Black community nearby do not pass through Palmares, and yet some members of the community today call themselves the "heirs of Zumbi," a deeply meaningful

choice, and one of the most effective ways of gaining visibility and advocating for rights.

If these histories demonstrate the value of remaining connected to Palmares, others suggest how and why it is at the same time important to think beyond Palmares. When the celebrated nineteenth-century writer José de Alencar wrote a novel about the Guerra dos Mascates (the Peddlers War), a Pernambuco rebellion that pitted Portuguese merchants against mazombos, a pejorative term for the local plantation owners on the other side of the conflagration, he turned to Palmares in search of a definition for the word "mazombo." As I show in the final chapter, linguistic evidence points us elsewhere, indicating the presence in Pernambuco of men and women from Zombo, an area in West Central Africa whose relation to the political unrest of the early eighteenth century in Brazil invites further research. While some histories await future work, the example illustrates that while Palmares and its memorialization have created different meanings and forms of inheritances, both have at the same time marginalized or denied other lines of inquiry. This book is deeply committed both to telling new histories about Palmares and to pointing the way to other stories yet to be written.

Language, Africa, Afro-Latin American Studies, and Palmares

In terms of both what it places front and center and what it pushes into the background, Palmares has much to teach us about Brazil, its connections to Africa, and the wider histories of diaspora in the Americas. Even within the vibrant, growing field of Afro-Latin American studies, it is not always clear how Africa relates to "Afro."[40] In recent years, scholars of diaspora have placed added emphasis on centering Africa, and diaspora has been richly studied and theorized for decades.[41] But what African languages, beliefs, ideologies, and histories must scholars of Afro-Latin America learn? While there is no single answer, recent Africanist provocations highlight the need to pay greater attention to linguistics, a daunting task for most Latin Americanists, given the sheer number of African languages.[42] The Niger-Congo language phylum, the most relevant to this study, is the world's largest and includes nearly 1,500 distinct languages.[43]

This book embraces the challenge of participating in what might be called a second linguistic turn, or at least what could become that for scholars of

the diaspora: a turning toward African languages in more detail and with new energy. Unlike the first linguistic turn, which mined the nuances of discourse to produce against-the-grain textual readings and deepen, complicate, or counter structuralist and materialist approaches, this one will employ historical linguistics to move beyond historians' "traditional archives and methods."[44] Related approaches have been honed for years by Africanists and scholars of Indigenous history in the Americas, most prominently in Latin America by practitioners of the New Philology.[45] But not a great deal of this kind of work bridges the Atlantic, at least not in the ambitious ways suggested recently by Kathryn de Luna and several others.[46] De Luna and other Africanists who employ comparative historical linguistics share with the pioneers of the first linguistic turn the belief "that language is the constitutive agent of human consciousness and the social production of meaning."[47] Perhaps ironically, their "documents"—words and roots—often feature a durability that bears more than a passing resemblance to the sturdy stuff at the core of materialist and structuralist history. It is no accident that comparative historical linguists liken certain words to "fossils" or "artifacts," which, with careful work, may be excavated to determine previously buried meaning(s).[48]

Africanist comparative historical linguistics sits in productive tension with Americanist scholarship on slavery. Recent years have brought innovative approaches to breaking through the archival gaps and silences that erase Black voices, especially women's. In one of the most eloquent contributions to the field, Marisa Fuentes asks, "How do we narrate the fleeting glimpses of enslaved subjects in the archives and meet the disciplinary demands of history that requires us to construct unbiased accounts from these very documents?" In posing the question, Fuentes challenges the distortions and violences of "the traditional archive," which she rereads to tell new histories.[49] Concerned with the very same problems, de Luna and other Africanists propose language as a path out of the colonial archive by tracing longue-durée meanings and changes in word roots to better get at "one of the most pressing concerns of Atlantic history—what enslaved Africans thought about their experiences—in and on the terms of the enslaved."[50] As Marjoleine Kars pithily notes, there was a "common theme" during the ages of slavery and Atlantic revolutions: "elites wanted one thing; commoners wanted another. Both called it 'freedom.'"[51] Africanist approaches and comparative historical linguistics take us even further to reveal additional vocabularies and ideas.[52] Utilizing these methods alongside others, *After Palmares* explores worlds after and beyond

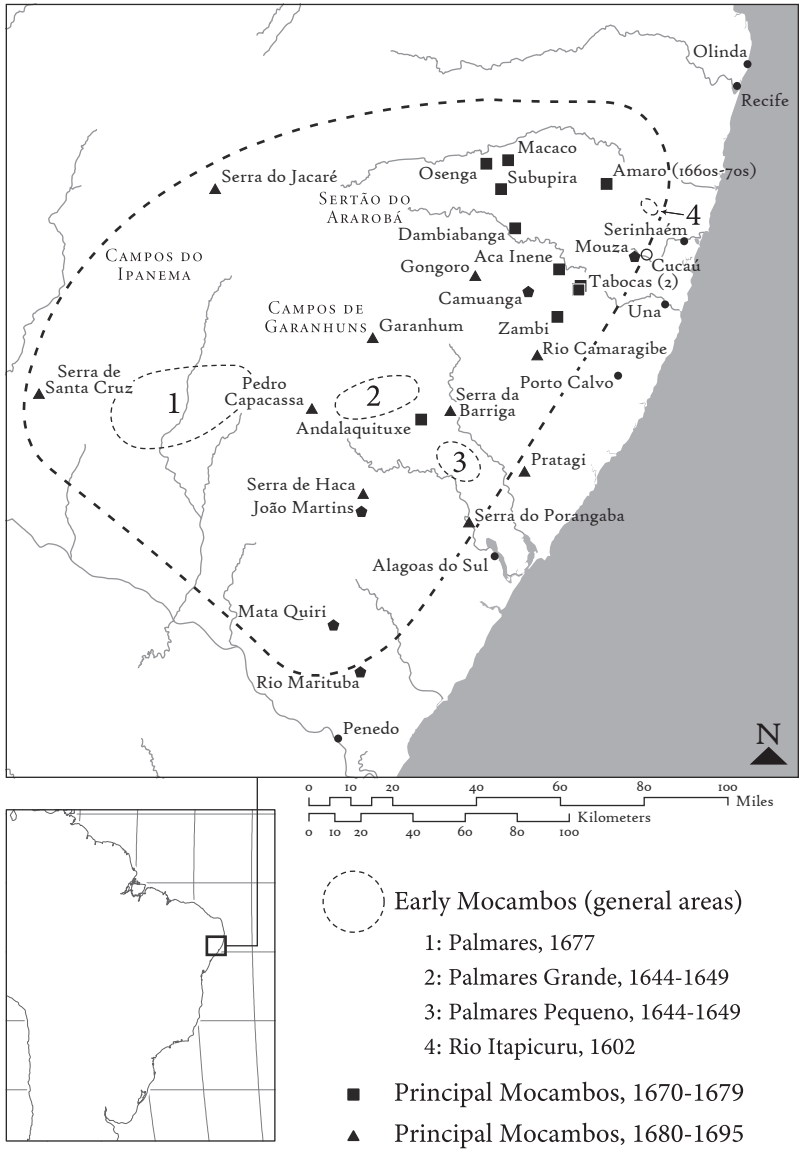
freedom, marronage, and other familiar and undeniably powerful terms and concepts.

While scholars of Palmares and Brazil have long been interested in African languages, we have approached them with a limited tool set. A prime example is in the overreliance on and oversimplification of Kimbundu and Kikongo, which were forged through violent and complex colonial processes and represent just a fragment of the languages spoken in West Central Africa. While a modern Kimbundu dictionary, the go-to reference for many scholars, can be revealing, it also often prevents the more nuanced accounts that comparative historical linguistics can provide. In appendix A, I lay out my approach, which I hope will be useful for other (Latin) Americanists interested in African languages. Three central points merit presentation here. First, in the context of the African Atlantic, de Luna writes, "Durable words were those that could speak from multiple perspectives simultaneously."[53] This is not as straightforward as it might appear. Wordplay, false cognates, subjective or simply erroneous translations, and a lack of evidence often make it difficult to identify, let alone make sense of, "durable words." Military, spiritual, human, and natural contexts help do this work, suggesting how and why Z/zumbi and other words and concepts came to mean and signal multiple things, sometimes at once, and how some definitions remained while others faded. Second, previous interpretations of language in Palmares are best thought of as starting points that often offer accurate but incomplete pictures. De Luna suggests that "Palmar" and "Palmares" did not just reference palm trees, which has been taken as a given, but also additional ideas with great cultural and political significance for Africans who arrived in Pernambuco and heard of or made their way to the mocambos.[54] Intriguing too is Luiz Felipe de Alencastro's observation that, as early as the sixteenth century, Portuguese sailors feared doldrums off the coast of Kongo called "Palmar," which could wreak havoc and even cause "deaths among the crew."[55] The association between "palmar(es)" and palm trees is, therefore, not incorrect, just incomplete. My own linguistic analysis, focused especially on Z/zumbi, is meant to generate new questions and fill in larger pictures. Third, while some aspects of African languages and comparative historical linguistics can be daunting, other insights are attainable through simpler means, sometimes through something as apparently bland and insignificant as a single letter—the difference between Zumbi and Zambi—or even the difference between capitalized Zumbi and lowercased zumbi. In some of these fine details dwell enormous

and remarkable histories, often with reach that extends far beyond Palmares's capacious borders.

This proliferation of etymologies and ideas pushes the discussion of Palmares beyond the usual topics covered in scholarship on maroon communities. For reasons that are perhaps obvious, most of the literature on marronage centers freedom and liberty, concepts that scholars have long suggested exist only in relation to slavery.[56] Some authors push beyond this dyad. Jean Casimir describes how French colonial officials and historians have often failed to grapple with the fact that freedom and "the norms and principles of the Christian, capitalist, and racist West" were not the end goals of all enslaved people or maroons in Haiti.[57] Anthony Bogues similarly pushes beyond "normalized" understandings of freedom by highlighting "invention" and "the radical imagination."[58] Invention and the radical imagination were staples of African action, idea, and belief throughout the Americas and in the face of overwhelming violence and insufferable conditions. Maroon settlements across the hemisphere are one of the most powerful testaments of this struggle. Simply assuming that they were endpoints risks falling back into dialectical traps and teleologies that Bogues and others have warned against. Internally diverse, existing in different iterations for a century, covering a state-sized swath of land, and populated by many thousands, Palmares was a generative space capable of becoming a point of genesis even as violent struggle turned it into a graveyard. The mocambos conferred power on some and subjugated others, all under the constant threat of military assault that altered its borders and prompted regular movement. To understand those dynamics and the worldviews and experiences that extend beyond the confines of freedom, liberty, and other western liberal idioms, it is necessary to look beyond 1695, into and through the eighteenth century, when now-familiar histories of Palmares became consecrated, often at the expense of other, less well-known stories.

While the book focuses on what happened after Palmares fell, it is also *about* Palmares. Only through deeper engagement with language, place, and spirit may we begin to craft a fuller picture of the mocambos and by extension other spaces and creations of Africans and their kin in the Americas. Thinking hard about language and place together reveals new possible meanings of Zumbi's name that also unveil a larger set of spiritual practices and beliefs. The paths that these meanings, practices, and beliefs traveled into, within, and beyond Palmares illustrate how language, place, and spirituality may



MAP 1.1 The Mocambos of Palmares

help us reconsider Palmares and in the process gain a better understanding of larger diasporas. While studying those diasporas and thinking about how to best challenge old narratives while suggesting future lines of analysis, I found the book's second epigraph, which favors capacious songs over narrow answers, to be an inspiring guide. The history of Palmares and its afterlives brings us face-to-face with the tension and interplay between songs and answers. Maybe not by chance, several of the most poignant examples of this arise in the form of birds and other flying figures. These and the different human, animal, and "supernatural" beings that animate the book all have songs to sing, some easier to hear than others.

NOTES

A NOTE ON LANGUAGE

1 Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own. Michaelis, s.v. "pardo," accessed October 16, 2022, https://michaelis.uol.com.br/palavra/pox3M/pardo%3cEi%3E1%3C/Ei%3E/.

2 I leave *negro* italicized throughout so as not to confuse it with the English word "Negro."

3 Mitchell, "Black and African American," 85.

4 Alberto, *Black Legend*, xii.

5 Again, to avoid confusion with English, I also leave *mulato* in italics throughout.

6 On the normalization of "white," see Stewart, "White/white."

7 A useful guide for language and slavery is Foreman et al., "Writing."

8 The term "Brasileiro," what we now translate as "Brazilian," was first used largely in reference to brazilwood traders and only assumed its modern meaning beginning around the turn of the eighteenth century. As this meaning took shape, Indigenous people were often called Brasilienses, and those born in America to Portuguese parents were Brasílicos. See Alencastro, *The Trade*, 20, 370–71.

9 To maintain consistency, I extend this capitalization practice to primary source quotations, the one exception to my rule to honor the original wording. For a persuasive argument in favor of capitalizing "white," see Perlman, "Black and White."

10 See Lara, *Palmares*, 177.

11 G. Rocha, "Maroons," 17.

12 I hew as closely as possible to the 2013 *Acordo ortográfico da língua portuguesa*, but also cede to *The Chicago Manual of Style* and in-house editorial styles and preferences (such as capitalizing the first word in a book's subtitle, which is not always standard practice in Brazil). *Acordo*; *The Chicago Manual*.

INTRODUCTION

1 Boxer, *The Golden Age*.

2 Though by no means an exhaustive list, useful points of entry into the English-language literature on maroon societies include Diouf, *Slavery's Exiles*; Florentino and Amantino, "Runaways"; Helg, *Slave No More*, 43–63; Landers,

"Leadership"; Lockley, "Runaway Slave"; Miki, *Frontiers*, esp. 171–215; Price, *Maroon Societies*; N. Roberts, *Freedom*; Sweeney, "Market Marronage"; Thompson, *Flight*; and Wright, "The Morphology." Additional works, especially the rich Portuguese-language literature, are discussed over the course of the book.

3 Antonio Silva and Bluteau, *Diccionario*, s.v. "palmar."

4 Eighteenth-century Brazil itself remains understudied. A recent edited collection on slave revolts dedicates eleven of fourteen chapters to the nineteenth century. Reis and Gomes, *Revoltas escravas*.

5 For overviews of the literature, see, Gomes, "Review"; and Lara, *Palmares*, 9–28. Additional representative works by Gomes and Lara include Gomes, *De olho*; Gomes, *Palmares*; Gomes, *Mocambos*; and Lara, "Quem eram." Other works on Palmares in English include Anderson, "The Quilombo"; Cheney, *Quilombo*; Hoogbergen, "Palmares"; Kent, "An African State"; Schwartz, *Slaves*, 103–36; and L. Silva, "Palmares." Debates about origins and identity also emerged from archaeological digs in Palmares during the 1990s. See Allen, "'A Cultural Mosaic'"; Allen, "Os desafios"; Allen, "'Zumbi'"; Funari, "A arqueologia"; Funari and Carvalho, "Interações"; Hertzman, "The 'Indians,'" 424, 429–30; Orser and Funari, "Archaeology"; and Thornton, "Angola," 51.

6 Decree No. 4.887, November 20, 2003, https://www.jusbrasil.com.br/legislacao/98186/decreto-4887-03.

7 For example, see Farfán-Santos, *Black Bodies*.

8 English-language treatments of reparations in the context of quilombos and contestations over the categories "quilombo" and "quilombola" include Araujo, *Reparations*, 1, 154–55, 168–69; Bowen, *For Land*, 216–22, Hoffman French, *Legalizing*, 92–100; Paschel, *Becoming Black*, 97–102; and Perry, *Black Women*, 10–11.

9 My approach to digital sources owes much to Putnam, "The Transnational."

10 I conducted the searches using the BN's Hemeroteca Digital at http://memoria.bn.br/hdb/periodico.aspx.

11 Slave Voyages website, https://www.slavevoyages.org/. I discuss the limitations of this database in chapter 5.

12 I follow the delineation in Thornton, *A History*, 1.

13 Thornton, *A History*, provides a great overview. Other entry points include M. Almeida, "Speaking"; Candido, *An African*; R. Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural*; Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans*; Miller, *Kings*; Miller, *Way of Death*; and Thornton, *The Kingdom*. Following common practice, I use "Kongo" to distinguish the precolonial area and kingdom from the contemporary nation-states. For an argument in favor of "Congo," see Alencastro, "Os africanos," 24.

14 D. Silva and Eltis, "The Slave Trade," 95.

15 D. Silva and Eltis, "The Slave Trade," 96. Also see S. Almeida, "Rotas atlânticas"; G. Lopes, "Negócio"; and A. Marques, "A travessia."

16 Finch, *Rethinking*, 142. Also see Camp, *Closer*; Holden, *Surviving*; and Morgan, *Laboring Women*, 166–95.

17 Araujo, "Dandara e Luísa Mahin"; Hertzman, "Fake News."

18 Emphasis in the original. Finch, *Rethinking*, 149. On the diverse ways that Black women rebelled, also see Kars, "Dodging Rebellion"; Sweeney, "Market Marronage"; and Thompson, "Gender."

19 Thornton, "Angola," 51.

20 I build on the work of scholars such as Mariana Candido, who examines the intertwined "threat of warfare, raids, and enslavers' activities," and Vincent Brown, who treats slavery as a constant state of warfare. V. Brown, *Tacky's Revolt*; Candido, *An African*, 15. Also see Alencastro, "História"; Barcia, *West African*; and R. Ferreira, "O Brasil."

21 Rocha Pita, *Historia*. Quote from Robertson, *History*, 147. Also see Janiga, "Sebastião da Rocha Pita's," 36; Lara, "Do singular," 82–83; Maria da Glória de Oliveira, "Fazer história," 43; and A. Reis, "Zumbi," 34.

22 Rocha Pita, *Historia*, 474.

23 I adopt "savage civilization slot" from Michel-Rolph Trouillot's "savage slot." Trouillot, "Anthropology."

24 See, for example, Earle, *The Return*.

25 García Márquez, *Chronicle*.

26 See, among others, Stern, "Paradigms." I discuss conquest at more length (and with additional citations) in Hertzman, "The 'Indians.'" For a recent take on conquest in Brazil, see, Schultz, *From Conquest*.

27 See, for example, Matthew, *Memories*; Restall, *Maya Conquistador*; and Restall, "Black Conquistadors."

28 "Carta [. . .]," March 14, 1696, Conselho Ultramarino: Brasil–Pernambuco (hereafter, Pernambuco), caixa 17, doc. 1697, fols. 3r–3v, Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (hereafter, AHU). I consulted the AHU documents online through the Projeto Resgate, a BN website, at http://resgate.bn.br/docreader/docmulti.aspx?bib=resgate.

29 Though studying East Africa, Neil Kodesh provides a useful and largely generalizable synthesis about how colonial Europeans (and subsequent generations of scholars) understood diverse political and spiritual elements and practices through a more singular lens of religion. Kodesh, *Beyond*, 17–20.

30 Historians, writes David M. Gordon, often struggle "to appreciate invisible worlds where spirits mobilize bodies to action in a fashion comparable to the invisible forces of their society, such as the state and its laws. Unfortunately, since the burden of the truth about the past weighs heavily on historians, they have had an especially difficult time dealing with worlds invisible and implausible to them." Gordon, *Invisible Agents*, 8.

31 R. Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural*, 245. Also see, among others, Alencastro, *The Trade*; Green, "Beyond," 111–18; and Miller, *Way of Death*. Walter Hawthorne employs a similar framework to the Amazon and West Africa in *From Africa to Brazil*.

32 E. Carneiro, *O Quilombo*; Ennes, *As guerras*; D. Freitas, *República*.

33 Gomes, *Mocambos*.

34 Lara's and Gomes's scholarship has been incredibly influential to my own work. I engage individual arguments over the course of the book. See Documenta Palmares; Lara, *Palmares*; Lara and Fachin, *Guerra*.

35 Price, "Refiguring," 212. Also see Price, "Reinventando."

36 Neruda, "Keeping Quiet," 28.

37 M. Carvalho and França, "Palmares," 132–33. Historians of slavery have not always shown the same interest in nature and place as scholars in other fields. See R. Brown, "'Walk,'" 291; R. Brown, *African-Atlantic*; Dawson, *Undercurrents*; McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds*; and Offen, "Environment." Notable recent exceptions from Latin America include de la Torre, *The People*; C. Leal, *Landscapes*; and G. Rocha, "Maroons." In the United States, see the foundational work of Camp, *Closer*.

38 Lara and Felipe Aguiar Damasceno have meticulously reconstructed maps of Palmares. See Damasceno, "A ocupação"; Lara, *Palmares*; and Lara, "O território."

39 In thinking about place, I have also been influenced by, among others, K. Basso, *Wisdom Sits*; Colson, "Place"; Cronon, "A Place"; DeLucia, *Memory*; Holden, *Surviving*; LaPier, "Land"; McKittrick, *Demonic*; and Watkins, *Palm Oil*.

40 For introductions to the field, see Andrews, *Afro-Latin America*; de la Fuente and Andrews, *Afro-Latin*; Reiter and Sánchez, *Routledge Handbook*.

41 Recent works that argue (in different ways) for the need to center Africa more fully include M. Almeida, "Speaking"; Bennett, *African Kings*; V. Brown, *Tacky's Revolt*; de Luna, "Sounding"; J. Johnson, *Wicked Flesh*; Lara, *Palmares*; Nafafé, *Lourenço da Silva Mendonça*; and Sweet, *Domingos Álvares*. The larger literature on the African Diaspora is vast. Of many entry points to choose from, see Ball, Pappademos, and Stephens, "Reconceptualizations"; Butler, "Defining"; Butler, "Multilayered"; Edwards, *The Practice*; Edwards, "The Uses"; Hertzman, "A Brazilian"; Lovejoy, "The African"; O'Toole, "As Historical"; Palmer, "Defining"; Vinson, "Introduction"; and Zeleza, "Rewriting."

42 De Luna, "Sounding"; Sweet, "Research."

43 Williamson et al., "Niger-Congo," 11.

44 De Luna, "Sounding," 584. A useful overview of the "linguistic turn" (largely from a Europeanist perspective) is found in Spiegel, "The Task."

45 For an appraisal, see Restall, "A History."

46 In addition to de Luna, "Sounding," see M. Almeida, "African"; Berry, "Poisoned"; Mobley, "The Kongolese"; and Sweet, "Research."

47 Spiegel, "The Task," 1.

48 Bostoen, "Bantu," 316; Klieman, *"The Pygmies,"* xxvi.

49 Fuentes, *Dispossessed Lives*, 1. Also see the enormously influential work of Saidiya Hartman (including "Venus" and *Wayward Lives*) and, among others, Alberto, *Black Legend*, esp. 10–11; Helton et al., "The Question"; Holden, *Surviving*; and Miles, *Ties*, 207–13.

50 De Luna, "Sounding," 583.

51 Kars, *Blood*, 5.

52 Also useful here is the way that Africanists have reevaluated oral history as a tool for studying precolonial history. See, for example, Kodesh, "History."
53 De Luna, "Sounding," 589–90.
54 De Luna, *The Long*, chapter 1.
55 Alencastro, *The Trade*, 254. Doldrums at sea are "The condition of a ship in which, either from calms, or from baffling winds, she makes no headway; a becalmed state." *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "doldrum (*n.*)," July 2023, https://doi.org/10.1093/OED/8865412137.
56 A classic elaboration of this point is found in Patterson, *Freedom*, 27.
57 Casimir, *The Haitians*, 147.
58 Bogues, *Empire*, 37. For additional perspectives that decenter old definitions of freedom and even seek to move past the term altogether, see M. Almeida, "Speaking"; de Luna, "Sounding"; Freeburg, *Counterlife*; J. Johnson, *Wicked Flesh*; and N. Roberts, *Freedom*. Also provocative and especially relevant for the importance of nature and place is Yesenia Barragan's delineation of how Blacks in nineteenth-century Colombia "exercised vernacular freedoms as guardians" of their land's "intricate rivers" and natural wealth. Barragan, *Freedom's Captives*, 281.

1. MARCH 21, 1645

1 "Carta [. . .]," June 29, 1603, in Gomes, *Mocambos*, 157. Also see Lara, *Palmares*, 167; and Gomes, *Palmares*, 50–52.
2 P. Rodrigues, "Copia," 255. The "*negros* de Guiné" might have been enslaved people from the Upper Guinea Coast, but because Guiné was also used more generically, it is possible that the group came from the sea island referenced in the account or from another African region. See Marcus Carvalho, "Negros da terra"; Lara, *Palmares*, 181; M. Oliveira, "Quem eram"; Soares, "Descobrindo"; Soares, "Mina"; Vainfas, *Dicionário*, 424–27.
3 S. Leite, *História*, 2:358.
4 After settling São Tomé around 1470, the Portuguese created a sugar regime dependent on enslaved Blacks, who established fugitive communities and periodically rebelled. The island also became a way station for enslaved people transported from the mainland to the Americas. See Alencastro, *The Trade*, 63; Dias and Diniz, "Os Angolares"; Lorenzino, "Linguistic," 205–8; Miller, "Central Africa," 23–24; Sweet, "African Identity," 233–37; Vansina, "Quilombos"; and Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*, 74–77.
5 "Diário da viagem [. . .]," 1645, in Gomes, *Mocambos*, 167–72. On Palmares during the Dutch occupation, see E. Carneiro, *O Quilombo*, 53–63; Gomes, *Palmares*, 61–68; R. Nascimento, "Palmares"; R. Nascimento, *Palmares*, 74–77; and Nieuhof, *Memorável*, 18–19.
6 "Diário da viagem [. . .]," 170.
7 Palmares benefited from an extensive external network of contacts, who sent word of military attacks well before they arrived. Though the mocambos raided