

“SEAFARER BY PROFESSION”: ENROLLMENTS OF SEAMEN AND THE MARITIME HISTORY OF PORTUGAL AND ITS DOMAINS IN 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES¹

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ABSTRACT

This study presents the *Enrollment Records* of merchant ships that left Lisbon between the second half of the 18th century and the first decades of the 19th century. I highlight the potential of this source for studies about circulation of seafarers. Among other topics, this source allows one: to make an inventory of positions and functions on board; to establish individuals' time of experience and age when they enrolled in professions of the sea; to establish relationships among types of vessels, routes, crew size and travel time; to establish the differences of naturalness, social condition, age, training and experience of the seamen.

KEYWORDS

Maritime History – seafarers – social history of labor.

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“MARÍTIMO DE PROFISSÃO”: AS MATRÍCULAS DE MARINHEIROS E A HISTÓRIA MARÍTIMA DE PORTUGAL E SEUS DOMÍNIOS NOS SÉCULOS XVIII E XIX

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RESUMO

Este estudo apresenta os registros de matrículas de navios mercantes que saíram de Lisboa entre a segunda metade do século XVIII e as primeiras décadas de século XIX. Destaco o potencial dessa fonte para estudos sobre circulação dos marítimos. Entre outros temas, a fonte permite: um inventário de cargos e funções a bordo; estabelecer o tempo de experiência e a idade dos indivíduos quando começavam nas profissões marítimas; relacionar tipos de embarcações, rotas, tamanho da tripulação e tempo de viagem; estabelecer as diferenças de naturalidade, condição social, idade, treinamento e experiência dos marinheiros.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

História marítima – marinheiros – história social do trabalho.

In many ways, this research dialogues with the book *De costa a costa*⁴, particularly with those chapters where the crews of slave ships in transit between Angola and Rio de Janeiro in the late 18th century to the mid-19th century are investigated. This book studies issues on which we still need to move forward, especially with regard to the sea workers' aspects of life: forms of recruitment, routes, hierarchy on board, duties and functions of officers and common sailors, values and ways of negotiating payments, types of ships and routes, and their relationships with the size of crews, the health and the mortality of the sailors, the rigid discipline in vessels, desertions, the naturalness and the language of the crew, mobility in space as a central element of maritime culture, the age range of officials and workers and the religious practices of sea workers, among others.

In recent years, my concerns ceased focusing on slave riggings. However, the general direction remains, i.e., the option of practicing the history seen from below, understood as a process and in a relational perspective, considering that relations between the parties impose mutual conditionings to historical subjects' actions. The inspiration arises from analyses of authors such as Eric Hobsbawm, particularly when he studied the history of popular movements.

For what I want to do in this text, there is not a pre-defined set of sources waiting for the historian. As Hobsbawm said, the historian of popular movements discovers only what he is looking for, not what is already waiting for him, and takes as example the notarial sources, to which social historians used to be refractory and that already seemed exhausted given the wide development of the Historical Demography. When social historians began looking for the parish records and developed techniques to analyze them, they found that important discoveries could be made⁵. Dealing with serial and demographic

4 RODRIGUES, Jaime. *De costa a costa: escravos, marinheiros e intermediários do tráfico negro de Angola ao Rio de Janeiro (1780-1860)*. São Paulo: Cia. das Letras, 2005.

5 HOBSBAWM, Eric. *A História de baixo para cima*. In: _____. *Sobre história*. São Paulo: Cia. das Letras, 1998, p. 220.

data for excellence, I do not intend to practice Historical Demography, Demographic History and History of Populations, but to write a historiography in which several methods may be managed by the social historian to deal with demography and relationship, exceeding these sociability dimensions and including classes, social groups, professional groups and specific relations of production as analysis objects. As Hobsbawm pointed out, the interest of demography for social historians lies in its clarification of certain aspects of structure and behavior of the family, of the trajectories of personal lives in different periods, and of the intergenerational changes⁶.

In this perspective, the leaders, events and institutions observed in the heights of institutional power acquire another dimension as we try to observe ordinary people, social life and struggles of the working world as objects of study, trying to understand the history and politics from people not necessarily exemplary or well placed in positions of power, but whose experience may be understood as collective from the empirical research.

In this paper, the focus is the experience of those who underwent the world of maritime labor, including free men and slaves. In this experience, the sea workers developed a culture and a knowledge that allowed them to move beyond the surrounding world of work that they had built and where they were inserted. They were not subjected with a predetermined historical task. I try to understand them in their time and space, and give a historical intelligibility to their experience.

Therefore, I made a systematic research of data existing in the *Enrollment Records of Crews* of merchant ships in service between Lisbon and the Portuguese harbors of America, Africa and Asia in the second half of the 18th century and first decades of the 19th. The subjects of the investigation are the crew members of merchant shipping in transit through the different Portuguese domains, to build a social

6 Idem. Da história social à história da sociedade. In: _____. Sobre história, op. cit., p. 96.

history of the seamen. Some research results are already published⁷, and the intention is to continue the search from a database with about 28,000 records of seafarers between 1767 and 1828.

Systematizing the data from these documents, I point out the questions that guide the research. Some hypotheses have a more consistent empirical support, as others still rely on investigation and crossing with varied documents, such as the correspondence with colonial administrators, court cases and travelers' reports.

The information was systematized into two main sections: the first shows data from the document, the ship and the route; the second shows data from individuals. The sections referring to the documents are: name of the archive; number and name of the book, pack and/or box in the archive; series (in general, books only have the name of the archival fund; the packs and boxes, with separate documents, bear the name of the series as well); name of the document (in books, the name is given by the clerk in the opening pages, in the packages and in the boxes, the name differs for each single document); name of the vessel; type of ship; number of crew members on board (almost always the list is numbered, when not by number, by order of registration); route (starting point, stopovers and arrival point); place of departure; place of destination and date of dispatch.

7 See RODRIGUES, Jaime. "Embarca agora a primeira vez": marinheiros na rota Lisboa-Rio de Janeiro nos séculos XVIII e XIX. *Revista do Arquivo Geral da Cidade do Rio de Janeiro*, Rio de Janeiro, n. 9: p. 15-30, 2015; Idem. Circulação atlântica: idade, tempo de trabalho e funções de escravos e libertos na marinha mercante luso-brasileira, séculos XVIII e XIX. *História, Franca*, n. 34: p. 128-145, 2015; Idem. Um perfil de cargos e funções na marinha mercante luso brasileira, séculos XVIII e XIX. *Anos 90*, Porto Alegre, n. 22: p. 295-324, 2015; Idem. Escravos, senhores e vida marítima no Atlântico: Portugal, África e América portuguesa, c.1760-c.1825. *Almanack*, Guarulhos, n. 5: p. 145-177, 2013; Idem. Marinheiros forros e escravos em Portugal e na América Portuguesa (c.1760-c.1825). *Revista de História Comparada*, Rio de Janeiro, n. 7: p. 9-35, 2013; Idem. Mariners-slavers and slave ships in Atlantic, 18th and 19th centuries: the perspective of captives and the slaveholders logic. *Africana Studia*, Porto [Portugal], n. 18, p. 205-222, 2012. Part of these articles was collected in RODRIGUES, Jaime. *No mar e em terra: história e cultura de trabalhadores escravos e livres*. São Paulo: Alameda, 2016.

For the individuals, the sections record: the entry number, the name of the crew member; naturalness (parish, district, town, bishopric, archbishopric); the attributed naturalness (province); age; boarding time (in years or number of trips made by the sea worker); name of the father; name of the mother; color; social condition (slave, manumitted or freedman; when these conditions are not mentioned, I deduce they are free men); on-board function; marital status; physical description and observations.

A state-owned impetus to produce records about individuals can be noted in Portugal in the second half of the 18th century. Several historians have drawn attention to the many laws and regulations published in the reign of José I, with multiple measures from the government under the orders of Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, then Count of Oeiras and future Marquis of Pombal. At that time, there was a wide legislation about trade, finances of monarchy, industrial arts and several issues related to colonial domains⁸.

In the case of trade and colonial domains, I highlight the regulations related to merchant ships. There were strict orders prohibiting "the passage of people to Brazil" that also aimed at preventing masters from receiving

"by sailor, cabin boy or young man, or under any other pretext, any person who is not legitimate, showing the identity of his person and his parents and homeland, and justifying that he is of the maritime profession and has resided in this kingdom by at least three continuous and successive years."⁹

8 AZEVEDO, João Lúcio de. *O Marquês de Pombal e sua época*. São Paulo: Alameda, 2004; FALCON, Francisco. *A época pombalina*. São Paulo: Ática, 1982; MAXWELL, Kenneth. *Marquês de Pombal: paradoxo do Iluminismo*. Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1996; MONTEIRO, Nuno Gonçalo. *D. José na sombra de Portugal*. Cais de Mem Martins: Círculo de Leitores; Centro de Estudos dos Povos e Culturas de Expressão Portuguesa, 2008.

9 JUNTA DO COMÉRCIO (JC). *Livro 1 – Matrículas das equipagens dos navios (1767-1768)*. Termo de abertura. Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (ANTT). Lisboa, Portugal.

Who lied about his condition would be subjected to six years in exile in Angola and “inability” to navigate or perform any job in the Royal Service¹⁰.

This kind of labor market reserve for Portuguese sailors was nothing new in the Kingdom of Portugal. The *Ordenações Filipinas* (Philippine Ordinances) had banned these men of being employed in “any navigations nor Navies (...) out of our Kingdoms and Domains” because “in our Kingdoms these men have to make their living from our Navy and navigations, there is no reason when, being our naturals, they do such navigations elsewhere (...)”¹¹. Therefore, new was the form of controlling the people’s circulation: from May 11, 1767, lists of the crew “with their names, ages and signs” began to be made¹². As part of this control, I highlight the *Registros de Matrículas/Junta do Comércio* for studies on Maritime History and the movement of individuals between the Portuguese dominions¹³.

Foreigners were practically forbidden to participate in Portuguese crews in this period, which brings an important indicator to reflect on the culture of these sailors in linguistic and religious terms. This reflection enables a historiographical dialogue with authors focused on English-speaking navies, for example, that highlight the internationalism as a flagship feature in these environments¹⁴.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ ALMEIDA, Candido Mendes de (Comp. e Ed.). *Código Philippino, ou Ordenações e leis do Reino de Portugal: recopiladas por mandado d’El-Rey D. Philippe I.* Rio de Janeiro: Typ. do Instituto Philomathico, 1870, p. 1247.

¹² JC. Op. Cit.

¹³ The general registration of sailors was not exactly a novelty of Pombaline time: a resolution of 1622 already had established their obligation. Its serial character, however, can be seen from the creation of the Board of Trade in 1755. See CRUZ JR., A. *O mundo marítimo português na segunda metade do século XVIII.* Lisboa: Edições Culturais da Marinha, 2002, p. 159.

¹⁴ Among others, see REDIKER, Marcus. *Between the devil and the deep blue sea: merchant seamen, pirates, and the Anglo-American maritime world, 1700-1750* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Considering the legal instructions, the enrollment of crew members from merchant ships began to be made in the Kingdom of Portugal and colonial ports¹⁵. The first enrollments date back to 1767 and the records continued at least until 1834, under the responsibility of the *Junta do Comércio* (Board of Trade), which made enrollments in the port of Lisbon, sending a copy of these documents to the captains for them to take it at the stopovers and the port of final destination, where they were checked and rewritten – many times they were just copied and changes arising from deaths or desertions of crewmembers were added. It was the *Mesa de Inspeção do Comércio* (Trade Inspection Bureau) that made the enrollments in the busiest colonial ports, as made clear the scribe José Jorge de Almeida, from Rio de Janeiro, by stating that the people in an enrollment had been “examined and compared in this Inspection Bureau”¹⁶. Recife also had an Inspection Bureau; however, such agency did not exist in places where the colonial administration was not equipped with all the bureaucratic agencies at the busiest ports. It was the case, for example, of Santiago at Cape Verde, where the correspondence does not even mention who signed the enrollment¹⁷. The same situation occurs at Paraíba, where several enrollments were made by the ombudsman, the ordinary judge or the secretary of local government¹⁸, or at São Luís of Maranhão, where the local ombudsman also elaborated enrollments because “at

15 In addition to the enrollment records, other documents were considered mandatory for Portuguese ships from the instructions issued by the Board of Trade in May 1781: passport, certificate and output load book, cf. Cruz Jr., *Op. Cit.*, 131-132.

16 JC. Relação das pessoas de que consta a equipagem do navio N. S. da Penha de França e São Francisco de Paula que vai para a cidade de Lisboa, 18 de dezembro de 1767. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 1, Box 2.

17 JC. Relação dos oficiais e mais pessoas da equipagem da corveta N. S. das Necessidades que vai para as Ilhas de Cabo Verde. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 1, Box 1. This document attached to the letter of 16 February 1768 from the Junta do Comércio a copy of the coming trip registration, from Lisbon to Cape Verde, and inserts the changes in it.

18 See, for example: JC. Relação dos oficiais e mais pessoas da equipagem da galera Bom Jesus dos Navegantes e São João Nepomuceno que vai para Lisboa. 10 de fevereiro de 1770. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 1, Box 2; Idem. Relação da equipagem do navio Senhor Jesus da Boa Fortuna que vai para Lisboa”, 7 de fevereiro de 1768. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 1, Box 1.

this city Your Majesty was not served send create the *Mesa de Inspeção*¹⁹. It was no different at Macau, China, where enrollments were also made by an ordinary judge, under license from the local Senate²⁰.

In its formal presentation, the order of records expressed the rigid hierarchy on board, and so remained in the course of time. Almost invariably, the captain, representative of the secular power, was the first man to be enrolled, followed by the chaplain, representative of spiritual power. Following the order, other officers were recorded, and after them, the scribe enrolled most of the crew: sailors, servants, young men and cabin boys, all of them handymen. At the end of the list appeared the slaves and freedmen (when there were men in those conditions on the ships), often without reference to the function on board, as if the social condition and, of course, the color, were synonyms of the work to be performed.

The formal hierarchy among seamen refers to some questions. First of all, the social condition of origin: officers used to be distinguished by information such as parents with name and surnames (commonly more than one surname), sometimes accompanied by the term "*dona*" (mrs.) when referring to their mothers or wives, or by differentiating words about the physical description of these individuals. In sequence, the hierarchy indicated the division of power from the functions: commanding officer, officers who did not necessarily played strict maritime functions and, at last, handymen. We can also perceive a hierarchy in the colors, because all white men, from any function, were registered before black and brown men.

19 "that returned [to Lisbon] (...) only with the novelty of getting Alexandre José, knave n°30, due to being unable to board by disease, as noticed; and embarks again (...) the priest Antonio Cordeiro Rocha, wearing the clothes of the Society of Jesus, whose stature and features are stated in the same relationship". JC. *Relação da equipagem do navio São Lázaro, que vai para o Maranhão, 11 de agosto de 1768. A viagem de vinda desde Lisboa se iniciara em 23 de março de 1768.* ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 1, Box 1.

20 Conselho Ultramarino (CU). *Alardo das praças que guarnece o navio Santa Cruz e Almas, o Visconde de Lourinhã, que deste porto se destina para o de Lisboa esse presente ano de 1785, Macau, 8 de janeiro de 1785.* Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (AHU). Lisboa, Portugal. Box 17, doc. 29.

Sometimes, there were officials registered in the middle or in the end of the list with different letters, which indicates that some crews were not composed at once, but gradually recruited on the quayside. Or that any member of the crew would not travel after being enrolled because of illness, desertion or other unspecified reason.

If in the first *Enrollment Records* the information to be filled is nearly complete, the informative quality of sources has been transformed over time and places where they were developed. It was not unusual that lists, such as the brig *Restaurador*²¹, had only the crew member's name, naturalness and his function on board. Or, as in many lists, that they had stated only the individual's name, his function and sometimes age and maritime service time²². This is not just a historian complaint about the declining potential of the sources, since silences and omissions are also relevant historical evidences. The absence of information about birth place, filiation and marital status could prevent the rapid exercise of certain rights and force actions of kinship recognition when the sailor died on duty, far from home, forcing his family to undertake long and expensive lawsuits to receive the inheritance to which they were entitled. These lawsuits involved parents and wives *versus* owners or captains of ships. So it was with people like Maria Ignacia, who had to face three lawsuits in 1799 to prove she was widow of the sailor Vicente Ferreira and receive the payment to which he was entitled²³. There were other widows as Feliciano Teresa (1767) and Josefa Gonçalves (1779), whose husbands had died in trips to Africa²⁴.

21 JC. Matrículas de equipagens, *Restaurador*, 1818. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 62, Box 204.

22 CU. Relação dos oficiais e mais gente da equipagem da corveta N. S. da Misericórdia e Santa Ana, que faz viagem para Lisboa. Rio de Janeiro, 5 de fevereiro de 1771. AHU. Lisboa, Portugal. box 92, doc. 8023; CU. Julgação da equipagem da corveta São Paulo vinda de Bissau para esta cidade do Maranhão...Maranhão, 22 de março de 1774. AHU. Lisboa, Portugal, box 47, doc. 4644; JC. Navio Santo Antônio de Lisboa, 4 de outubro de 1781. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 34, box 112.

23 FEITOS FUNDOS (FF). Juízo da Índia e Mina. ANTT. Lisboa. Sheaf 85, n° 13, box 85; sheaf 112, n° 1, box 112; sheaf 118, n° 8, box 118.

24 FF. Juízo da Índia e Mina, Justificações Ultramarinas, África. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 8, n° 10, box 17 e sheaf 20, n° 8, box 35, respectively.

Sometimes the lawsuits involved mothers whose sons had died in overseas travels, as Maria Gonçalves Monteiro, widow woman whose son Manuel Joaquim had embarked as a sailor and traveled to India²⁵, or brothers who, having lost their parents, struggling to receive what was their right, as in the case of José de Oliveira Gomes, from the Azores, wanted the inheritance of his brother Manuel Gomes de Oliveira, seaman at the ship *Senhora do Cabo*, belonging to the *Companhia de Comércio do Grã-Pará e Maranhão* (Grão-Pará and Maranhão Trading Company), who died during a trip from Guinea (Africa) to Belém do Pará (Brazil) in 1772²⁶. In many registrations made in Lisbon in 1785, for example, the married men had registered their marital status and eventually the name of their women; in the case of the single ones, the records include the names of their fathers and mothers²⁷. This information reinforces the idea that filiation or marriage data refer to the right of these heirs in receiving the payments in case of death of the crew member on professional duty.

Designed to control the entry and exit of the people on four continents, the *Enrollment Records* also show the attempts and strategies to flee control – such as escapes and desertions – and, eventually, the rare professional growth in maritime occupations. The Captain General of Cacheu (Africa) and his assistants felt the absence of a crew member when checking the list of a ship from Lisbon, “that let us know the Captain General himself of having fled in this town (...) Manuel José, sailor”. The document did not inform the fugitive’s color, but his naturalness (Guinea) and something about his replacement: “in his place there came a black man from Guinea, named Francisco Manuel (...)”²⁸. Both were probably slaves or freedmen. However, it

25 FF. Juízo da Índia e Mina, Justificações Ultramarinas, Oriente, 1789-1790. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 11, n° 4, 1789/1790.

26 FF. Conservatória Geral do Grão Pará e Maranhão. ANTT. Lisboa. Sheaf 35, n° 1.

27 See: JC. Navios Santa Ana e Santa Isabel; N. S. dos Prazeres e Santíssimo Sacramento; N. S. da Vitória e São José Princesa de Portugal; Santa Ana, São José e Almas; Santo Antônio Horda Murta. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 34, box 112.

28 JC. Relação dos oficiais e mais pessoas da equipagem da galera N. S. da Conceição que vai [de

was not men only in this condition that deserted, as did the white cook Francisco Nunes, born in Vila do Conde (Portugal), 42 years old and 12 years of maritime experience, who fled after the registration in Lisbon, before the ship set sail for Pernambuco (Brazil). In addition to the name of their parents, the physical description in the enrollment would be useful for enforcement authorities to meet and punish him: he was a man of "ordinary stature, thick, long and white face, blue eyes, thick nose, black and straight hair"²⁹. Two young men who had been born in Faro, Algarve (Portugal), and that would make the first transatlantic voyages of their lives, gave up of boarding the ship *N. S. da Conceição, São Jose e São Frutuoso*, to depart from Lisbon towards Bahia (Brazil) in 1767. They were 21 and 22 years old, respectively, and perhaps from a previous arrangement, they fled and were replaced at work by other sailors³⁰. If the information about desertion circulated among captains in the Atlantic ports, the physical description could also have served to identify those who, fleeing the difficult conditions on board, tried to engage in another vessel. The circulation of information could create problems and derail deserters' aims. Black men, whether slaves or freedmen, almost never were physically described in enrollments, making difficult their location and facilitating their escape.

Regarding the positions and functions on board, the *Enrollment Records* are also revealing. As previously noted³¹, we can distinguish the officers (with command functions) from the men who held lower positions in seamanship and who fulfilled jobs that required physical strength and dexterity. Beyond the description of their activities, the social historian is interested in the potential and effective conflict

Lisboa] para Cacheu e Cabo Verde, 1 de junho de 1768. ANTT. Lisboa. Sheaf 1, box 1.

29 JC. Livro 1, Navio São José Rei de Portugal, 3 de julho de 1767. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Book 1, fl. 34.

30 JC. Livro 1. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Fl. 166v.

31 RODRIGUES, Jaime. Um perfil de cargos e funções na marinha mercante luso brasileira, séculos XVIII e XIX. Op. Cit.

involving these two professional and social groups – approach from which the Atlantic historiography has drawn inspiring analyses³².

For now, we can point to some trends in command and pilotage offices. The profusion of pilots' nomenclatures (first, second and third pilots, practitioner, etc.) was common in the 18th century and in the first decades of the 19th century, documenting the fact that many ships carried more than one man responsible for conduction, especially those employed in longer routes or in ships with more numerous crews. From the point of view of logistics and safety of men and cargo, this seemed to be an appropriate measure, which did not prevent distortions given by the rigid social hierarchy: several practitioners were sons of the captains, very young and inexperienced to take on the management and control of ship if it were necessary. It was the case of young boys like João Batista Martins, 16 years old; João Álvares da Silva, 15 years old, and Teofeno de Oliveira Vale, 10 years old on his first trip³³, all of them practitioners.

The *Enrollment Records* also allow to investigate other positions of officers on board: masters, foremen, chaplains and clerks, among others, besides those related to the health and nutrition of the crew (cupbearer, cooks, bakers, surgeons, barbers, apothecaries, bleeders

32 See, among others: REDIKER, Marcus. Between the devil and the deep blue sea...Op. Cit.; LINEBAUGH, Peter; REDIKER, Marcus. A hidra de muitas cabeças: marinheiros, plebeus e a história oculta do Atlântico revolucionário. São Paulo: Cia. das Letras, 2008; PÉREZ-MALLAÍNA, Pablo E. Los hombres del océano: vida cotidiana de los tripulantes de las flotas de Indias, siglo XVI. Sevilla: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Diputación de Sevilla, 1992; AFONSO MOLA, Marina; SHAW, Carlos Martínez. Los trabajos y los días del marinero del Antiguo Régimen. In: CHACÓN, F. e HERNÁNDEZ, J. (ed.). Espacios sociales, universos familiares: la familia en la historiografía española. Murcia: Universidad de Murcia, 2007; CARUSO, Laura Gabriela. "Onde manda capitão, não governa marinheiro"? O trabalho marítimo no rio da Prata, 1890-1920. *Mundos do Trabalho*, Florianópolis, v.2, n.3: jan./jul. 2010; BARREIRO, José Carlos. A formação da força de trabalho marítima no Brasil: cultura e cotidiano, tradição e resistência (1808-1850). *Tempo*, Niterói, v.15, n.29: jul./dez. 2010.

33 JC. Livro 1, Navio Santa Ana e Santa Isabel, rota Lisboa-Bahia, 13 de outubro de 1767; Livro 2, navio Santa Rosa e Senhor do Bonfim, rota Lisboa-Angola, 3 de junho de 1767; Navio Santíssima Trindade e Santo Antônio, não consta a rota, 2 de dezembro de 1782 ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Book 1, fl. 118v; book 2, fls. 22-22v; sheaf 34, box 112; respectively.

and stewards) and mechanical crafts necessary in maritime works (coopers, caulkers and carpenters). In relation to the sea workers by excellence, there was also a gradation of positions and functions, from cabin boys to young men, until sailors and knaves.

For all of them we may build profiles considering their social and ethnic origin, region of origin, engagement time and age at enrollment. Sometimes, we also know their marital status, physical characteristics and places of residence, identifying areas of concentration of seafarers and their families in a port city like Lisbon. If we confront data on marital status and place of residence, we will know if the sailors were married in the parishes where they were born and if they lived in another place, indicating a terrestrial mobility in the Kingdom of Portugal in search of employment and inclusion in the maritime work world, or stay in the place of birth if they had not left their homeland and had occupations exercised until the time of the first shipment on a merchant ship that would cross the oceans.

These considerations also open the possibility of writing short biographies, taking the documents listed herein as starting points. The *Enrollment Records* already bring some prosopography in the etymological sense, because they have a specific item for description of individuals' facial features. We can advance to the historiographical sense of the term, as the Micro History has been practicing, for example, and other projects that have been gaining strength. I quote here the *Sistema de Consulta Prosopográfica Colonial* (Prosopographic Colonial Query System), developed by colleagues at the University of Pernambuco, whose objective is

“to build a base of prosopographic references that can provide support for research in Social, Modern and Colonial History. For the community of historians, this system is intended to facilitate historical research, cataloging and providing references to colonial documentation (...) scattered in different national and foreign archival collections. The focus of the system in the Pernambuco captaincy is justified as this was, for centuries, a political and economic center of great influence on Portuguese America as a whole, and on the captaincies of the North of the State of Brazil in particular. In turn, and without forgetting the dynamic and diverse social structure intrinsic to this Captaincy,

the emphasis of this database lies with the colonial sugar elite established at the political centers of the province in question: this is explained by the historical relevance of this elite, in general composed of planters and sugar cane farmers, but from the 18th century, integrated also by large traders, took in the process of territorial conquest and implementation of colonial structures in Portuguese America as a whole. Moreover, the mixed configuration of these social groups ensures that, when studying the sugar elite, the historian goes around, showing a complex scenario that goes far beyond sugar planters (...)"³⁴.

In a text recently published³⁵, the authors assessed small professional biographies of ordinary people whose lives are difficult to scan because of the diminished quantity and quality of documents about this segment of the colonial population. I will illustrate this possibility through the case of the freed and "black man" Salvador Antunes, who has perhaps made his entry into the maritime labor world by choice. The first record that I have of him tells about a sea trip made at 33 years old, as a cabin boy in the galley ship *N. S. do Monte do Carmo e San Francisco*, from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro in April 1768. It is possible that he has entered into Portugal illegally in the condition of captive, because since 1761 the coming of overseas slaves to the Portuguese kingdom was prohibited³⁶, and maybe his freedom has to do with the illegal entry. Even without having been trafficked from Africa to Portuguese America, the classic way for a slave to initiate in the maritime experience, Antunes already knew the sea for going from Rio de Janeiro to Portugal, probably in the company of his former master. Reporting that it was "the first time that he embarks," his enrollment shows that this formula recorded his *first time* as a sea worker. Unlike other slaves and ex-slaves, Salvador knew who his parents were and

34 Sistema de Consulta Prosopográfica Colonial, SICONP/CNPq/UPE, available from <<http://www.projetosiconp.org/>>, access on March 10, 2016, 13h58.

35 RODRIGUES, Jaime. Circulação atlântica. Op. Cit.

36 Law of September 19, 1761, available from <http://www.iuslusitaniae.fcsh.unl.pt/verlivro.php?id_parte=105&id_obra=73&pagina=1152>. For a discussion of the senses of the law in historiography, see: RODRIGUES, Jaime. Escravos, senhores e vida marítima no Atlântico. Op. Cit., p. 150-152.

could sign his own name. Apparently, the maritime mobility marked his life since then: six years later, he ascended on the board hierarchy and became a knave. *Young boy*, the degree he occupied on the first trip, was a designation that, along with *cabin boy*, showed the lack of professional expertise, degree situated between pages and sailors³⁷, while the *knave* had the functions like the sailor in the Portuguese merchant navy on 18th century.

The use of the expression *knave* declined significantly in the early 19th century, when the term *sailor* began to be used more often for the workers on the ships. In condition of knave, Salvador Antunes has appeared in at least two trips in the galley ship *N. S. da Oliveira, São José e Santa Ana*, always between Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro, when the record of his age shows the inaccuracies of the document about people who were born in captivity: in 1774, the record claims that he was 42 years old and had ten years of maritime experience, while in the following year the record claims that the knave was 46 years old and had the same ten years on experience. Given that the registration was self-declared, Salvador could have had a different intention in changing his age on purpose; however, when declaring a wrong age of a crew member in the same ship, it also could be demonstrating that he did not know precisely the year of his birth³⁸.

But there is the possibility of following in more details the biographies of people like the captains, on which the documentation is more generous due to their social status and the network of rela-

37 CAMPOS, Maurício da Costa. Vocabulário marujo: ou conhecimento de todos os cabos necessários ao navio; do seu poliame e de todos os termos marujaes, e de alguns da construção naval e artilheria; de indispensável conhecimento do oficial do mar. Rio de Janeiro: Of. de Silva Porto, 1823, p. 62; AMORIM, João Pedro. Dicionário da Marinha. Lisboa: Imp. Nacional, 1841, p. 177; FREITAS, Antonio Gregório de. Novo dicionário de marinha de guerra e mercante. Lisboa: Imp. Silviana, 1855, p. 209.

38 JC. Livro 3, Matrículas das equipagens dos navios (1767-1769). Relação dos oficiais e mais equipagem da galera [...] que segue viagem do porto desta cidade do Rio de Janeiro para a de Lisboa, 5 de fevereiro de 1774 ANTT. Lisboa Portugal. Maço 1, caixa 5; e JC. Relação dos oficiais e mais equipagem da galera [...] que segue viagem para a cidade de Lisboa, 17 de julho de 1775. ANTT. Lisboa Portugal. Sheaf 1, box 5.

tionships in which men like them were inserted. From the list of ship merchant captains, we can know with some precision what kind of events occurred around the command of ships. Let us take for example Agostinho de Sousa Madeira, found in at least three trips from Lisbon to Recife between October 1767 and March 1770 as sea captain at *N. S. da Estrela*, *Santa Ana* and *São Boaventura*, property of the *Companhia de Comércio de Pernambuco e Paraíba* (Pernambuco and Paraíba Trading Company). The ship commanded by him was large, judging by the size of the crew (around 55 crew members on each trip). In his 50 years old, Madeira claimed vast maritime experience at this point of his life: twice he claimed having 32 years of maritime engagement, and on the last trip, he said having over 40 years. Whatever the numbers, he started very young in maritime life, certainly in condition of practitioner. Madeira was born in the port of Peniche, populous and great commercial movement town since at least the 17th century, at the Portuguese province of Estremadura. As almost all captains, he signed his name on record, which indicates that he had some ability in writing. On the records where I could find his name, the clerks described him physically: Madeira was a tall man by the parameters of the time, with brown and cheerful eyes, round and sallow face, high forehead – perhaps an initial baldness, which along with the lack of brightness in the skin, are signs of his age. Some teeth were missing “in the upper chin”, which was also quite common.

Madeira sued “an knave” of the *Companhia de Comércio de Pernambuco e Paraíba* named Pedro Antônio Leite da Cunha, for stealing things and farms that belonged to Madeira in the port of Recife, where the defendant found himself stuck in 1772³⁹. He also processed José Pereira dos Santos, master caulker in the shipyard of the *Junta da Administração da Companhia de Comércio de Pernambuco e Paraíba* (Board of Directors of Pernambuco and Paraíba Trading Company), who had borrowed just over 10,000 réis (the Portuguese currency of that

39 FF. Conservatória da Companhia Geral de Pernambuco e Paraíba. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 1, n° 3, box 1.

time), which ended up being paid by the widow of the defendant⁴⁰. Apparently, Madeira was a relatively wealthy man and acted as a kind of moneylender to people from lower social background, because he was the author of at least one more action to receive 82,000 réis lent to the second pilot of the ship *N. S. do Rosário e São José*, Antonio Rodrigo Leal, obtaining an order in the court that required the defendant to pay him at least 35,000 réis to avoid being imprisoned at Lisbon, where the ship that had brought him from Recife was anchored. The rest of the debt was paid by the attachment of almost 50,000 réis that the *Companhia de Pernambuco e Paraíba*, the second pilot's employer, owed him⁴¹.

As a sign of distinction, the captain Agostinho Madeira wore long hair, a common thing among marine officers⁴². The expression "he wears long hair", as we read in many enrollments, does not clarify whether it was a natural or fake long hair, as the lexicographer Bluteau wrote using texts of classical Rome to say that wigs were "nobility insignia", whose use was only allowed to "secular and distinguished men"⁴³. Eventually, among older and more experienced sailors we also noted the use of long hair. For now, I can only create hypotheses: did these sailors use to be distinguished from the other workers, below them in the hierarchy? Would they be more experienced and gained the distinction by custom? Or to use long hair was a provocative gesture, perhaps undisciplined, for they make fun of officers who also used it?

40 FF. Conservatória da Companhia Geral de Pernambuco e Paraíba. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 5, nº 12, box 7.

41 FF. Conservatória da Companhia Geral de Pernambuco e Paraíba. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 13, nº 6, box 17, fl. 41.

42 JC. Livro 3. Matriculas das equipagens dos navios (1767-1769). Relação dos oficiais e mais pessoas da equipagem do navio N. S. da Estrela, Santa Ana e São Boaventura que vai para a cidade de Lisboa. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 1, boxes 1 and 2.

43 BLUTEAU, Raphael. Vocabulario portuguez & latino. Coimbra: Collegio das Artes da Companhia de Jesu, v. 2, 1712. p. 12-13.

The merchant ships crossed the oceans carrying men and cargo. Among them there was a lot of diversity, given by types, cargo capacity, routes, time of travel, size and composition of crews.

As for the types, there was a lot of imprecision. Historians face a problem when trying to establish the types of slave ships, and the question remains in this paper. From studies about Brazil and Cuba⁴⁴, and samplings of slaver ships in the Angola-Rio de Janeiro circuit in the 18th and 19th centuries⁴⁵, we know some characteristics of the main types of vessels involved in the transatlantic trade of human beings: corvettes, brigs, galleons (differentiated mainly by the set of sails, but similar in load capacity), schooner (smaller but faster and therefore used on shorter routes). In the Luso-Brazilian merchant navy of the second half of the 18th century, the typologies were also varied, defined by the quantity and format of the sails and masts⁴⁶.

In a sample of 9 brigs active from 1775 to 1821, three crews counted less than 20 men; none had more than 30. Independently of the load and the route, they were medium-sized ships. Brigs had similar crews, even when they circulated in long routes such as linking Lisbon to Macau: rarely exceeded 30 men. Moreover, on the East route, we find vessels simply called ships. With these little explanatory typologies, we have a sampling of six vessels sailing with crews ranging

44 KLEIN, Herbert. O tráfico de escravos africanos para o Rio de Janeiro, 1795-1811. In: COSTA, Iraci del Nero da (org.). Brasil: História econômica e demográfica. São Paulo: FINE-USP, 1986, p. 77-93; KLEIN, H. & ENGERMAN, Stanley. Padrões de embarque e mortalidade no tráfico de escravos africanos no Rio de Janeiro: 1825-1830. In: PELAEZ, Carlos M. & BUESCU, Mírcea. A moderna história econômica. Rio de Janeiro: APEC, 1976, p. 102; LEUCHSENDRING, Emílio Roig de. De cómo y por quiénes se realizaba en Cuba la trata de esclavos africanos durante los siglos XVIII y XIX. Estudios Afrocubanos, Havana, v.1, n.1, 134-5, 1937; VILA VILAR, Enriqueta. Algunos datos sobre la navegación y los navíos negreros en el siglo XVII. Historiografía y Bibliografía Americanistas, Sevilla, v.3, n.17: 224, 1973.

45 RODRIGUES, De costa a costa... Op. Cit., p. 145-149.

46 CRUZ JUNIOR, Op. Cit., p.167-168. The author also notes that "there are substantial differences in the tonnage measurement methods from the English, French or Swedish systems, to speak only of these" (Idem. Ibid, p. 128), which, added to the absence of architectural projects and to the almost absence of remains of vessels, hampers the possibility of description and more precise definition.

from 57 to 148 men. It was not unusual that, on this route, the crews had more than one individual capable to pilot. The *Temerário*, for example, took three pilots (when the normal was to have only one), while the *N. S. da Ajuda e São Pedro de Alcântara* had three pilots, two practitioner pilots, two surgeons, three responsible for loading, two carpenters and two caulkers. In *Santa Cruz e Almas, o Lourinhã Viscount*, the captain also was the pilot, and yet there were two other professionals in this specialty and one practitioner. In the *N. S. da Esperança e Netuno*, the captain also piloted, besides having two others pilots and five practitioners, two carpenters and three stewards. Three pilots and six practitioners were the crew of *Vasco da Gama*, showing not only the possibility of replacing losses by illness or death, but also the training of young men for piloting in this long and slow route⁴⁷.

If the vessel to Macau had huge crews, the shorter distances allowed captains to reduce the number of men on board. Taking a sample of seven ships that made ten trips from 1767 to 1781 between Lisbon and Paraíba and vice versa, we have crews with 30 men, on average, having the smallest 20 men and the largest, 43. From one harbor to the other, the trip lasted about 60 days, and the ships carried loads of the same nature: sugar, leather, salt beef, cotton and wood of Brazil⁴⁸.

47 JC. Matrícula da equipagem do brigue português *Temerário*, pronto a seguir viagem para Macau, de que é proprietário José Nunes da Silveira vassalo português, Matrícula dos oficiais e marinheiros do navio *Vasco da Gama*, que segue viagem para o porto de Macau, com escala pelo Rio de Janeiro em 1821, de que são proprietários João Lourenço da Cruz e Joaquim dos Ramos. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 37, box 128; JC. Matrículas de Equipagens, nau *N. S. da Ajuda e São Pedro de Alcântara*; navio *N. S. da Conceição Princesa de Portugal* e *N. S. da Esperança e Netuno*. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal. Sheaf 34, box 112; CU. Alardo das praças que guarnece o navio *Santa Cruz e Almas, o Visconde de Lourinhã*, que deste porto se destina para o de Lisboa esse presente ano de 1785, Macau. AHU. Lisboa, Portugal. Box 17, doc. 29.

48 Ship *Senhor Jesus da Boa Fortuna*: AHU/CU, Pernambuco, box 103, doc. 8002. Ship *N. S. da Conceição, Santo Antônio e Almas*: AHU/CU, Paraíba, box 29, doc. 2148; Maranhão, box 57, doc. 5294 e Pernambuco, box 128, doc. 9714. Galley ship *Bom Jesus dos Navegantes e São João Nepomuceno*: AHU/CU, Paraíba, box 25, doc. 1902; Paraíba, box 25, doc. 1929; Pernambuco, box 111, doc. 8579 and Pernambuco, box 113, doc. 8732. Ship *Santo Antônio Delfim*: AHU/CU, Paraíba, box 30, doc. 2179 and Paraíba, box 32, doc. 2338.

It is also possible, by *Enrollment Records*, to verify whether the shorter trips, such as those intended to São Luís and Belém, employed more first-timer sailors, which would be a way to train the workers, inside a rationality of the long-distance shipping.

This and other questions will be answered as the analysis moves forward. We can establish the differences in age, training and experience in the maritime crafts by excellence and those who could also be exercised on land (chaplain, surgeon, carpenter, caulker, cooper, barber etc.), still researching the naturalness and time experience of the men and deducing the age at which they went out to sea, on average, and find out if there were variations according to place of birth and local circumstances, such as the difficulty of access to land for peasants, disease or supply crisis. The age factor can be further investigated with regard to a possible predominance of young men in the performance of menial services in the same vessel and some equilibrium between older and young men, combining experience and physical strength in the composition of crews. Having a pilot of 70 years of age, as at the *N. S. da Conceição, São José e Fama* in 1795⁴⁹, could put into service the ship an experienced man, but a sailor or other handyman at that age had hardly function on board.

This list of issues is provisory and incomplete, as the historical knowledge is mandatorily provisory and incomplete. The intention was to expose the pretensions of a research, its consequences, the impossibility of answering some questions, the emergence of issues that were not on the agenda before and the paths that need to be covered during the research process.

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49 JC. Lista da equipagem do navio N. S. da Conceição, São José Fama que segue viagem para o Rio de Janeiro, 3 de agosto de 1795. ANTT. Lisboa, Portugal.Sheaf 34, box 113.

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