

Article

A Black Cartographer of the Long Eighteenth Century: Anastácio de Sant'Anna's *Guia de Caminhantes*

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Abstract: From 1816 to 1817, Anastácio de Sant'Anna, a *pardo* (mixed-race) artist and cartographer active in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, produced the *Guia de Caminhantes*, a manuscript atlas of Brazil and the Americas. Sant'Anna's *Guia* is one of the few extant cartographic works produced by a Black artist during the slavery era. Discussing the *Guia* in English for the first time, this essay positions Sant'Anna's work inside of the emergent subfield of Black Geographies. It argues that Sant'Anna used the *Guia* to advocate for the place of Black and Indigenous histories in Brazil's nascent, post-colonial national identity, while also interrogating the history of cartography and landscape painting in colonial Brazil.

Keywords: cartography; Brazil; blackness

1. Introduction: Black Cartographies?

In an essay foundational to the emergent subdiscipline of Black Geographies, Katherine McKittrick (2011, p. 948) argues that “Transatlantic slavery. . . was predicated on various practices of spatialized violence that targeted black bodies and profited from erasing a black sense of place”. As a result, she notes, “Black diasporic histories are difficult to track and cartographically map”. Concerned broadly with interrogating the ways Blackness prompts analyses of free and restricted movement, territorial boundedness and segregation, and fugitivity from the earliest plantations to the present-day prison-industrial complex, Black Geographers have shown particular interest in Black communities’ diversity of approaches to place- and community-making (McKittrick 2006; Bledsoe 2017; Bledsoe and Wright 2019). For McKittrick (2011, p. 948), the structural histories of racial disenfranchisement, plantation slavery, and the “relational violences of modernity” collectively necessitate that we consider the diversity of Black “alternative mapping practices”—including maroon landscapes, fugitive escape routes, family maps, and directions embedded in music and song, “alongside ‘real’ maps”.

McKittrick is right to put scare quotes around ‘real.’ As cartography historian Matthew Edney (2019, p. 1) argues, “there is no such thing as cartography”. Edney instead frames the cartography as an exercise in aestheticizing and naturalizing relations of power; an idealized performance of racialized and colonial hierarchy enacted through its material output, the “map”. Edney’s observation carries special resonance for histories of Black cartography, where scholars have often framed the historic relationship between material cartographic objects and Blackness as an almost axiomatic opposition.¹ And with perhaps good reason: looking at the cartographic archive of the slavery-era Americas, one quickly sees Blackness rendered either as an aestheticized form of subservience to whiteness, or as an irritating anti-colonial node to be eliminated.

One eighteenth-century map encapsulates this tension. *The Layout of the Conquered Maroon Village Called Boekoe* (Figure 1), by the Dutch cartographer Juriaan François de Friderici, depicts the layout of Fort Boekoe, a fortified settlement of the Boni Maroons in Suriname, razed by a militia in September of 1772 (Hoogbergen 1990, pp. 70–82). The map’s title and aerial-view perspective make it clear that the maroon village itself served



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as impetus for the map's creation, yet only as a form of violent erasure: a dialectic that underscores why maroon communities have been such critical points of theorizing for Black Geographies (Rarey Forthcoming). Yet, also consider the tension Friderici produces in the map's elaborate title cartouche, held up by a scantily-clad—and thus alluding to maroon status—Black figure. The figure enacts a colonial fantasy of converting marronage to subservient labor, and here evokes his own subjugation through the map's material production. Yet, the figure's equally dominating presence and confident pose also suggest the persistence of maroon life and resistance even after Fort Boekoe's seeming destruction.

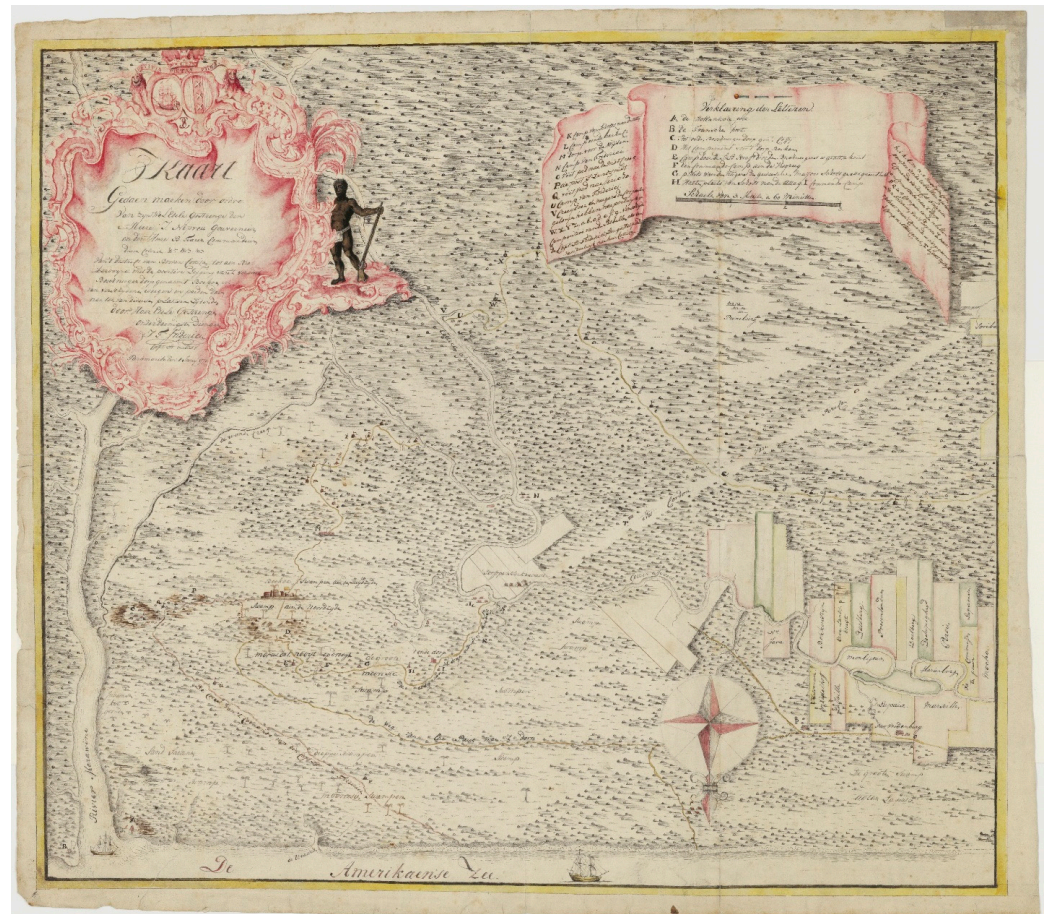


Figure 1. Juriaan François de Friderici (1751–1812). *The Layout of the Conquered Maroon Village Called Boekoe*, 1773. National Archief, Amsterdam (4. Vel 2127).

Black cartographers have long responded to this dialectic of spectacular presence and invisible subjugation that runs through cartographic renderings of Black spaces and places. W.E.B. Du Bois and Louise E. Jefferson, two African American artists and cartographers working in the first half of the twentieth century, produced maps explicitly meant to interrogate the instantiation of whiteness in cartographic depictions of the United States (Figure 2).² Earlier works are much more difficult to locate. At an 1812 trial in Havana, for example, Spanish interrogators described a “map of Europe, Africa, Asia, black residents of Africa, Cádiz, Castle of Saint Sebastian, Rock of Gibraltar”, part of the infamous and now-lost “Book of Paintings” assembled by José Antonio Aponte, a free Black militiaman and artist, confiscated when he was accused of planning a rebellion (Digital Aponte n.d.). Few other references exist to maps produced by Black artists during the slavery era. And while distinct in cultural and historical context, Aponte, Du Bois, and Jefferson’s works are all explicit in their anti-colonial and anti-racist politics. Grouping them together as I have done here risks reinforcing a perception of Black artistry as inherently political or asserting that Black cartographers operate in a binary and antagonistic opposition to

“colonial” epistemologies and cartographic practices. More specifically, Jefferson’s work provides one model of Black cartographies that suggests that the visibility of Black histories depends on framing Blackness as “uprooted”, and thus in axiomatic opposition to the modern Western nation-state.

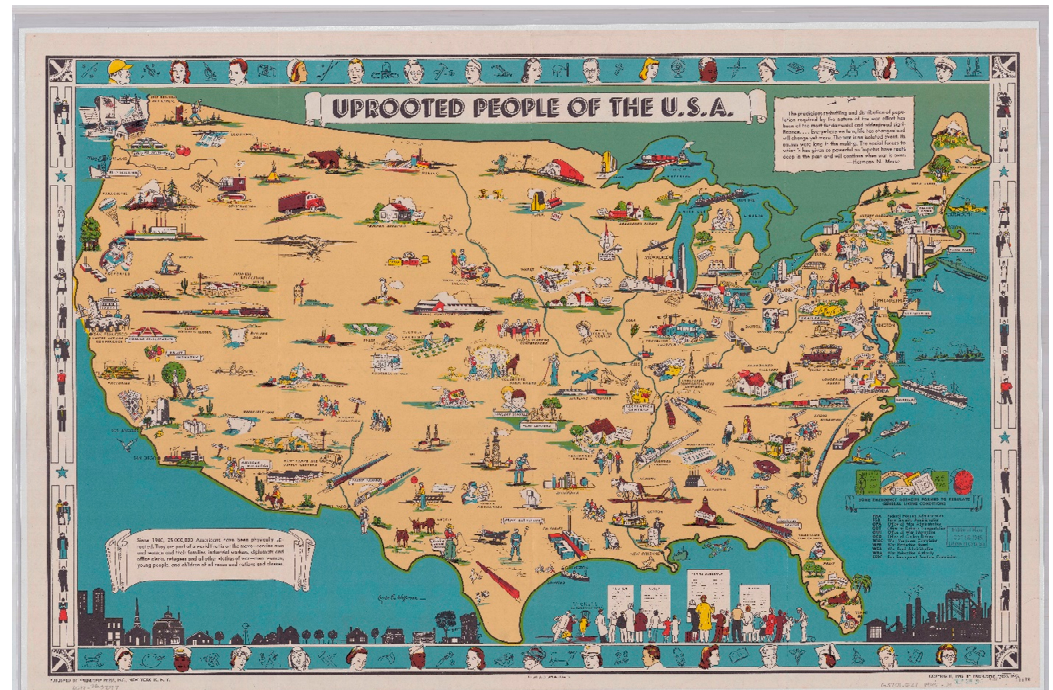


Figure 2. Louise E. Jefferson (1934–2009). *Uprooted People of the USA*, 1945. G3701.E27 1945.J4, Geography and Map Division, The Library of Congress, Washington, DC.

This essay adds the *Guia de Caminhantes* to this small corpus of cartographic works produced by Black artists during the era of Atlantic slavery. Completed from 1816 to 1817, the *Guia de Caminhantes* (“Guide for Walkers”; hereafter referred to as the *Guia*), held at the National Library of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro, is one of the few extant cartographic projects completed by a Black artist in the early nineteenth century. In the *Guia*’s introductory text, its artist, Anastásio de Sant’Anna, identifies himself as an “old” (*velho*) painter of mixed race (*pardo*), and a resident of Salvador (also known as Bahia, after the eponymous captaincy for which Salvador served as capital and primate city), a major port city in northeastern Brazil where he had long lived and where he completed the work.³

The *Guia* has attracted scarce attention in Lusophone scholarship and has never been discussed in English prior to the present article.⁴ Yet, it is a rare example of a manuscript map of Brazilian territory produced outside of the context of a military or surveying expedition in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Adan and Kantor 2021). Far exceeding its somewhat timid title, the *Guia* is more properly thought of as an atlas: an unbound grouping of thirteen hand-drawn, hand-colored, aerial-view maps depicting, as the work’s cover page outlines, “Kingdoms and Provinces of America, especially of Brazil”.⁵ While opening with a large planisphere and a map of Brazil, the rest of the *Guia* consists of eleven aerial-view maps of Brazil’s captaincies (the name for Portuguese colonial Brazil’s political divisions), which collectively detail their rivers, mountain ranges, beaches, settlements, churches, sugar mills (*engenhos*), controlled Indigenous settlements (*aldeias*), and roads: all landmarks that would be important to any early nineteenth-century “walker” referenced in the *Guia*’s title.

As this essay explores, the *Guia* evinces the artist’s intimate knowledge of two centuries of the history of cartography and landscape painting, and these references potently intersect with the social politics around the artist’s racial identity in the final years of

Brazil's rule by the Portuguese. However, by reproducing and yet subtly shifting conventions of Portuguese military cartography, Sant'Anna's *Guia* traverses the boundaries between military precision and painterly imagination. Sant'Anna produced, re-framed, and challenged the intersections of empire and racialization in a political and social context in which race strongly stratified—but did not neatly latch onto—the hierarchies of colonial society. In turn, the *Guia* foregrounds the antiquity and contemporary persistence of Black and Indigenous histories in Brazil and the wider Americas. As if responding to Jefferson's *Uprooted People of the USA* more than a century before she produced it, the *Guia* frames Blackness not as diasporic, but rather as Indigenous to the Americas and in turn constitutive of the modern nation-state. In this way, the *Guia* starkly contrasts with the maps discussed previously by productively interrogating the opposition of violent colonial cartographies and Black alternative mapping practices. In so doing, it demonstrates how one Black cartographer crafted an intermingled vision of Black, Indigenous, and colonial histories and epistemologies to forge a novel vision of Brazilian national identity on the eve of its independence.

2. The *Guia de Caminhantes*: Sources and Context

In the *Guia*'s eleventh map, depicting the captaincies of Bahia, Minas Gerais, and Piauí, Sant'Anna renders longitude with "the city of Bahia" at zero. The gesture may speak to Sant'Anna's pride in his home city, but it also testifies to Salvador's critical political position as Sant'Anna completed the *Guia* in 1817 (Sousa 2008). Though Salvador had served as the capital of Portuguese colonial Brazil since the mid-sixteenth century, the city had been relegated to secondary status after the capital's 1763 transfer to Rio de Janeiro. Salvador again toyed with primacy in the early nineteenth century as the Portuguese royal court fled the Napoleonic Wars in Europe and temporarily relocated to Brazil, making Brazil the first country in the Americas to house the government seat of a European empire. In 1808, King João VI and his family spent one month in Salvador before moving on to Rio de Janeiro; Rio would remain the Portuguese empire's temporary capital until the Empire of Brazil's independence in 1822.

The Portuguese Crown's relocation to Brazil encouraged the colonial settlement of the Brazilian interior, which prior to this period had been predominantly populated by Indigenous peoples who had been displaced by colonial activity on the coast (Miki 2018, pp. 2, 4). This means Sant'Anna completed the *Guia* during a surge of interest in mapping the country's interior as a proxy for territorial conquest and implicit civilizing. Sant'Anna's *Guia* also seems to preface the Brazilian Empire's 1824 Constitution, which extended citizenship to anyone born in Brazil, regardless of racial background (excluding the enslaved): through the twentieth century, celebratory narratives continued to extol Brazil's racial admixture and harmony as a core principle of national identity (Miki 2018, pp. 4–5). Even then, as Yuko Miki (2018, p. 5) outlines for the period following Sant'Anna's *Guia*, "the Atlantic frontier became a theater of staggering anti-Indigenous violence and the entrenchment of African-based slavery" as a byproduct of increased settlement. Then, as now, those histories of enslavement colonial dispossession expose the façade of the concept of "racial democracy" that had been invoked throughout the twentieth century to assert that Brazil's socioeconomic inequities were unrelated to its racial pluralism (da Costa 2000, pp. 234–46).

In Salvador, Sant'Anna would have experienced the political implications of such inequities firsthand. He was part a large, vibrant, diverse Black population in a city that for two centuries had been a major disembarkation point for enslaved Africans in Brazil (and Brazil itself received around forty percent of all enslaved Africans who arrived in the Americas between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries). In the early nineteenth century, two thirds of Salvador's population was of African descent, enslaved and free (Mattoso 1992, p. 86), while shipping routes—established around the turn of the eighteenth century—directly linked Bahia with West African ports (Verger 1976). Evidence of the city's African character was everywhere: African-born merchants dominated the city's street economy by selling food and African-made textiles, while African languages were as commonly

spoken as Portuguese (Hicks 2020; Miki 2018, p. 1). Bahia's African populace also shaped its politics: a series of African-led revolts and conspiracies in early nineteenth-century Bahia shook the foundations of the city's slaveocratic order (Reis 2003b).

Outside of the political and social context in which Sant'Anna worked, a paucity of archival records makes it difficult to contextualize the *Guia*. The Torre do Tombo National Archive in Lisbon contains the earliest known mention of the artist, albeit when Sant'Anna was likely middle-aged: a 1796 denunciation sent from Salvador to the Portuguese Inquisition in Lisbon, accusing Sant'Anna of forming a "pact with the Devil".⁶ The Lisbon Inquisitors saw through these trumped-up charges and the case never went to trial, but the denunciation describes Sant'Anna as a free, married, pardo man who painted maps and created perpetual lunar calendars (*lunarios perpetuos*).⁷ Over two decades before producing the *Guia*, Sant'Anna was already well known for his artistic and cartographic creations. The denunciation describes him as an "official painter", a designation suggesting that Sant'Anna was a respected professional and, by implication, an active participant in one of Salvador's many mixed-race, Catholic confraternities (*irmandades*) that supported free professional artisans and craftspeople.⁸ Black Catholic brotherhoods had long served as incubators of Black agency in Brazil by purchasing freedom for the enslaved, providing social and economic aid to members, and creating pathways for social mobility and collective solidarity (Mulvey 1982; Reginaldo 2011; Valerio 2021a). Sant'Anna's likely membership in one of these confraternities, though, does little to help us understand his political orientations: while directly connected to the rise of Black political consciousness through the nineteenth century, brotherhoods were diverse in their priorities as they "paved a middle ground between resistance through revolt and flight and assimilation to European *modi essendi*" in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Valerio 2021a, p. 244).

Little is also known of the official to whom Sant'Anna dedicates the *Guia*: Captain Pedro Francisco de Castro. Documents dated between 1798 and 1806 attest to a Bahian slaughterhouse administrator with that name, an important position in the city (Graham 2010, p. 115). In 1819, Castro served as administrator in the Casa da Ponte, a wealthy estate in the Bahian interior (Silva 2010, p. 702). And in 1821, he was listed as a Bahian subscriber to an annal on science and arts for the Portuguese community in Paris (*Lista Geral Das Pessoas que tem honrado, com a sua subscrição 1821*, p. 31). Though these references provide no solid information as to why Sant'Anna felt Castro specifically was the key audience for the *Guia*, he appears to have been a wealthy administrator during a tumultuous political period, and so a good audience for Sant'Anna if the painter wished to impact Bahia's politics at the highest levels.

Attesting to the artist's commitment to cartography, historians Caio Figueiredo Fernandes Adan and Kantor (2021) have identified a series of unsigned early nineteenth-century manuscript maps of Brazil, which they attribute to Sant'Anna on stylistic grounds. Distributed at archives in Rio de Janeiro, some of these maps appear to be early studies for those found in the *Guia*, suggesting that the *Guia* was the culmination of years of study and analysis by the artist; in short, his magnum opus. Yet Sant'Anna's decades of work in cartography prior to the *Guia* is striking given that he does not appear to have even been employed by the military or studied military cartography in an official capacity. The 1796 denunciation does not mention military service nor is military background referenced in the *Guia*.

Between the 1759 expulsion of the Jesuit order from Brazil and Brazilian independence in 1822, almost all manuscript maps of Brazilian territories were produced in the context of military surveying expeditions.⁹ Fittingly, the *Guia*'s maps reproduce some of the major conventions of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Portuguese military cartography: an emphasis on aerial perspective; defined captaincy borders; fastidious naming of rivers and towns; standardized representations of topographic features; and exacting scales for measuring distance. These conventions originally emerged from eighteenth-century Portuguese military training reforms that prioritized cartographic training alongside scientific precision and technical uniformity. Importantly for the argument below, these military

and cartographic reforms went together with desires in Lisbon to increase control over what it viewed as colonial hinterlands (Furtado 2019, pp. 73–74). Reforms instituted by the Marquis of Pombal—the effective dictator of Portugal from 1750 to 1777—utilized military cartography as a tool of colonial authority, conducting surveys to identify and suppress rebellious Indigenous and maroon communities while also assimilating hinterland territories and Indigenous peoples into direct Portuguese territorial control (Barickman 1995, p. 334; Falcon 1983; Schultz 2016, pp. 209–10).

Given his lack of military background, Sant’Anna’s work in cartography prompts two questions. One is factual: how did Sant’Anna access the knowledge and military maps necessary to produce the *Guia*? Adan and Kantor (2021, pp. 121–22) productively suggest that the Bahia Public Library in Salvador may have provided Sant’Anna access to a range of manuscripts and printed maps on which to base his designs, especially since the library received a large donation of maps in 1812. Sant’Anna also would have had access to the Bahia Military Academy (*Aula Militar da Bahia*), founded in the mid-eighteenth century by José Antonio Caldas, a military engineer born in Bahia and one of the Portuguese Empire’s most prolific cartographers. Interested laymen could attend classes at the Academy, and Kantor (2016) rightly speculates that Sant’Anna may have been one of these.

Informed speculation on the question of Sant’Anna’s access to military cartography does not answer the second question: why was he interested in it at all? One clue comes from Sant’Anna himself, who describes the *Guia* as a correction for the “many errors that are found in some imprecise Maps of the interior” of Brazil, by which he means military manuscript maps. Sant’Anna claims the *Guia* corrects the names of rivers; presents the proper names for towns and settlements (*povoações*); and establishes formerly erroneous latitudinal and longitudinal lines. However, naming practices are never neutral. As Kantor has noted, Sant’Anna’s *Guia* makes “a point of giving Indigenous names to places, rivers and cities, acting as a philologist, concerned with recapturing the characteristics of Amerindian culture from before the arrival of the Portuguese” (Casa de Oswaldo Cruz 2011). Sant’Anna’s reliance on Indigenous place names does not necessarily signal his investment in a kind of contemporary anti-colonial politics. Rather, as I explore below, it may reflect the complex and shifting implications of the ongoing Indigenous presence in Brazilian history, one which could be antagonistic to or supportive of colonial projects.

3. The *Guia* as Sant’Anna’s Vision for Brazil and Its Histories

Sant’Anna’s effort to correct the “errors” of contemporary cartography begins not with maps, but with an unprecedented watercolor painting on the bottom left of the *Guia*’s title page. The image depicts an encounter at “Jiquitaia”, described by Sant’Anna as a beach in Salvador formerly known as a thriving commerce center for the area’s Indigenous population (Figure 3).¹⁰ Though, in 1817, Jiquitaia was home to a newly-constructed Portuguese military fort (Silva 1835, p. 324)—one that still utilized the beach’s name, and so shows the Portuguese imperial appropriation of Indigenous (specifically Tupi) landscapes—Sant’Anna envisions Jiquitaia as a place of ethnic egalitarianism and relative peace. Sant’Anna’s painting presents a group of white European men—identified by their skin tone and their dress—trading weapons, alcohol, and other objects on the beach. Indigenous peoples, depicted by Sant’Anna with feathered headdresses and skirts, interact on equal footing, as do persons of African descent. The two Black women he depicts appear to be in relationships with Indigenous men; one at left holds their child. In the foreground, a man with skin tone matching the white Europeans emerges with an Indigenous woman from behind a banana tree. His red cap and feathered skirt suggest he has long lived in the area’s Indigenous communities.



Figure 3. Anastásio de Sant'Anna (active Bahia, Brazil, 18th–early 19th century). Untitled frontispiece to the *Guia de Caminhantes* (“Kirimurê: Ancient gentile name of Bahia, and place where the city of S. Salvador was founded”), 1817. CAM.04,003—Cartografia, Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

As the figures on the beach point to trade goods (and even hold up a white mask) with looks of curiosity and contemplation, and as they wear clothing contemporary to the sixteenth century, the watercolor evokes a sense of initial encounter, as if the Europeans are arriving at Jiquitaia for the first time. Sant'Anna's title for the painting furthers this reading. “Kirimurê: Ancient Gentile name of Bahia, and place where the City of São Salvador was founded”, references the beginnings of Bahian history while also emphasizing the area's Tupi name.¹¹ However, further details complicate this initial timeline. Most obvious is the figure at bottom left, which Kantor has identified as Catarina Paraguaçu, a sixteenth-century “Tupinambá indigenous woman from Bahia, who was offered by her father, the chief Taparica, to the Portuguese castaway Diogo Álvares, known as Caramuru”, an identification supported by the white figure accompanying her (Casa de Oswaldo Cruz 2011). In turn, Sant'Anna presents Black residents in Kirimurê and shows them as full members of Tupinambá worlds, even though no enslaved Africans arrived in Brazil prior to the mid-sixteenth century, after the “founding” of Salvador the title references.¹² By including persons of African descent and Indigenous names in the scene at Jiquitaia, Sant'Anna does more than forward a vision of Brazil's multiethnic history that would soon be enshrined in the 1824 Constitution. He also argues that Bahia's “founding” is, perhaps, inextricable from the ways Black, European, and Indigenous worlds commingled and co-evolved in Brazil, independent of the histories of exploitative labor and land dispossession that characterized the late colonial and postcolonial imperial periods.

From a contemporary vantage point, this scene of egalitarian encounter appears like an apology or erasure of colonization's violence. However, looking to the possible inspirations for Sant'Anna's painting, critical distinctions emerge that show the force of his vision. The painting's wide-angle landscape view, receding into a bay and framed with Brazilian flora, suggests Sant'Anna's familiarity with longer histories of Dutch painting used to naturalize and aestheticize Brazilian landscapes and histories of forced labor. A 1649 painting by Frans Post testifies to the role of Dutch landscape painting in aestheticizing enslaved labor in colonial Brazil (Figure 4). A wide view looks back to rolling hills punctuated with lakes and rivers. Industrialized sugar mills sit atop the hills at right, while enslaved people work a bit of cleared land at center. Post renders the centrality of industrialized slavery to Dutch

Brazil as a natural, aesthetic inheritance of the Brazilian landscape. Meanwhile, a small anteater traipses in the foreground, just in front of a prominent pineapple and a tall palm tree at right—displaying ripe palm fruits dangling from the top—frames the image.



Figure 4. Frans Post (1612–1680). *Brazilian Landscape with Anteater*, 1649. Oil on canvas, 53 cm (20.8 in) by 69.4 cm (27.3 in). Accession 1560, Alte Pinakothek (Bavarian State Painting Collections), Munich, Germany.

Sant’Anna’s artistic choices suggest a throughline between colonially cultivated visions of tropical, Edenic labor and Sant’Anna’s own painting. The foreground pineapple appears once again, as does the framing palm tree, alongside further floral additions like cashew fruits and a banana tree. However, unlike Post, Sant’Anna puts human action squarely in the foreground and emphasizes barter and economic exchange over attempts to aestheticize forced labor. Sant’Anna’s quite literal foregrounding of the word “Jiquitaia” may reinforce the point: the beach’s name is the Tupi word for the powdered form of a chili pepper native to the Americas. Highly desired by the Portuguese who purchased it from Tupinambá merchants, the chili was soon exported through Portuguese trade routes into Iberia and Africa. By the early seventeenth century, people across the Atlantic world instead called this chili *malagueta* after an unrelated but equally prized West African spice (da Cunha 2012, p. 73; Gomez Ortega 1780, p. 9; Osseo-Asare 2014, p. 85). Culturally and etymologically, Sant’Anna’s use of “Jiquitaia” harkens less to a pre-contact image of Tupi history than a wide-ranging reference to the co-evolution of Indigenous, African, and European knowledge in and through Atlantic commerce. Fittingly, Sant’Anna does not restrict Black and Indigenous figures to laborers or workers for an invisible white elite—in which the value of their lives would be restricted to their bodily production—nor, in turn, are they portrayed as being in awe of, or saved by, white settlers in the common European saviorism trope that would run through Brazilian history paintings later in the nineteenth century (Figure 5). Instead, the beach scene places economic and cultural agency in the bodies and minds of Afro-Indigenous histories, while also disentangling sartorial practice and cultural identity from skin tone.



Figure 5. Victor Meirelles (Brazilian, 1832–1903). *The First Mass in Brazil*, 1859–1861. Oil on canvas, 270 cm × 357 cm. Museu Nacional de Belas Artes, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

In this way, I read “Kirmurê” as Sant’Anna’s early effort to work through what Sandra Harvey (2020) outlines as a key problem in later 20th- and 21st-century Black intellectual history and politics: how articulations of Black identities are often framed around “an existential pull . . . that renders black existence, especially but not solely outside of Africa, permanently and always already ‘unrooted’”. The counterpoint to that sense of displacement, Harvey notes, is often “the Western nation-state”. Faced with a tension between Blackness’ uprooting and the patriotic cartography of Brazilian nationhood, Sant’Anna created a painting that refused to place Blackness in opposition to Indigeneity, a point underscored by the inclusion of the Afro-Indigenous child in the scene at Jiquitaia. As I detail below, he constructs a vision of Bahia’s founding that roots Blackness and even African botanicals as Indigenous. And through the presentation of Caramuru, the castaway, he refuses to let Europeans claim the political project of the nation-state, instead showing them as equal inheritors of diaspora, Indigenization, and forced acculturation.

This vision of the co-constituted Indigeneity of Tupi and Black worlds Sant’Anna presents as constitutive of Brazil may be reinforced in the botanicals he depicts. Cashew fruits, at left, are native to Brazil, but bananas and pineapples—two fruits that Sant’Anna positions as native in this retelling of Bahia’s founding—were transported to Brazil from West Africa in the sixteenth century. While Frans Post’s mid-seventeenth-century painting participates in a longer colonial strategy of cultivating visions of botanical hybridity and grafting to aestheticize and naturalize the violence of settler colonialism (Casid 2005), Sant’Anna reframes foreign transplants—which include human beings and cultivated plants—as altogether native to Bahia. This is what separates Post from Sant’Anna: the latter asserts the antiquity of Indigenous and African shared knowledges and harkens to a diverse, vibrant world that includes them both, independent of histories of European domination. However, complicating this reading is another background detail showing how Sant’Anna continues to play with timelines: a battle scene likely referring to the 1625 Spanish–Portuguese reconquest of Salvador following its Dutch occupation.¹³ Perhaps Sant’Anna is collapsing the major events of Bahia’s history here, but it also speaks to the

proto-nationalist tone of his *Guia* by re-envisioning the moment when Bahia was brought back under Portuguese imperial sovereignty, a point that may have carried strong weight as Brazil served as temporary home to the Portuguese Crown.

Why might Sant'Anna be asserting this vision of Afro-Indigenous antiquity and Brazilian national and imperial pride all at once? What motivated his project to imagine the political contours of Blackness outside of a diasporic framing? Sant'Anna's self-description as a "painter" and an "old pardo" may reveal much about his intent. The general term still preferred by mixed-race Brazilians to define themselves, *pardo* in the early nineteenth century, indicated a person's African—and potentially also Indigenous—ancestry, but also more generally referred to someone who was neither white (*branco*) nor Black (*preto*), with the latter term typically suggesting enslaved status. As was true throughout colonial-era and early imperial Brazil, vocabularies and self-definitions of color were, as historian Silvia Hunold Lara notes, "more to indicate social positions than referring specifically to an individual's nature" (Lara 2007, p. 141). In this sense, *pardo* was often equivalent to *mulato*—another term referring to multiracial ancestry—but *mulato* carried stronger pejorative connotations. Sant'Anna's upbringing in the second half of the eighteenth century took place around, as Miguel A. Valerio outlines, a "popular notion that mixed-race Afro-Brazilians constituted colonial Brazil's most deviant and unruly socioracial group" (Valerio 2021b, p. 49). In this context, Valerio elaborates, those who could often expressed a "preference for the term *pardo* instead of the sullied one of *mulato*, popularly associated with licentiousness and ungovernability" (Valerio 2021b, p. 49).

Sant'Anna's self-definition may be related to his artistic prowess. Valerio (2021a, 2023) has also shown how *pardo* artists in late colonial Brazil had greater access to artistic work and exploration, and so could pursue opportunities unavailable to darker-skinned Brazilians in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.¹⁴ However, Sant'Anna may also have been invested in showing the role of pardos in the formation and participation of a nascent Brazilian national identity, as well as negotiating their political position in the midst of the movement of the Portuguese court and the African rebellions at the time he created the *Guia*. Sant'Anna's sole reference to racial categories in the *Guia* is telling in this regard: along the bottom edge of his 1816 map of the captaincy of Mato Grosso, Sant'Anna relays the story of Tomás da Natividade, a *pardo* man, who in Goiás was made a salaried infantry captain by the governor.

Why would Sant'Anna have gone out of his way to relay this little-known story? Did Sant'Anna delineate Natividade's race—same as the artist—as a testament to his social position, either by status or by aspiration, to prove pardos' participation in the construction and maintenance of the Brazilian state? At the same time, did Sant'Anna also testify to the position of pardos in a social context where they routinely faced barriers in compensation for their service in colonial conflicts? Intriguingly, Sant'Anna may have known pardos in Bahia as both artisans like him and militia members: as Hendrik Kraay (2001, pp. 91–92) notes, in 1809–1810, 18 of 30 members (60%) of Salvador's fourth militia regiment (reserved for mixed-race Brazilians like Sant'Anna), were employed as artists. Three were painters. All likely held far less wealth than their white counterparts in the second regiment: while mixed-race Brazilians were common in Portuguese militia ranks, as were Indigenous Brazilians, their racial status posed frequent barriers to earning full salaries and land rights. And finally, might the reference to Natividade here remind the *Guia*'s readers of the political differences between Africans and Brazilian-born *crioulos* (creoles) like Sant'Anna, none of whom participated in the Bahia rebellions (Reis 2013, p. 82), and indeed, were likely among the militiamen who suppressed an African-led uprising near Salvador in 1816, just as Sant'Anna began work on the *Guia* (Reis 1988, p. 121)?

Small details like this begin to put the viewer on notice of the multiple, overlapping political interventions in Sant'Anna's work. This continues in the first manuscript map of the *Guia*: a planisphere of the Americas (Figure 6). As art historian Tatiana Reinoza (2023) has outlined, the planisphere was deployed as a technology of what she calls the "Western cartographic gaze" and a proxy for territorial conquest and racial hierarchization

reproduced on countless travelogues and cartography manuals dedicated to the colonization of the Americas (Figure 7). Yet here, the map’s cartouche—typically the domain of colonialist fantasies of *terra nullius* or the deployment of figures that confine and define Indigenous and Black labor—emphasizes Indigenous empires: it notes the “city of Mexico” and the “city of Cusco”, capitals of the Aztec and Inca states, respectively, their first and last rulers, and those rulers’ undoing by the Spanish in 1521 and 1533. Again, Sant’Anna not only highlights the antiquity of Indigenous civilizations here, but even asserts a new theory of the peopling of the Americas: Sant’Anna titles his map as actually identifying the “parts” from which those who populated the Americas came: “if from Asia, as various authors write, see the parts of China, Japan, and Tartary . . . and those who came from . . . Europe and Africa”.¹⁵ Sant’Anna collapses the entire history of the Americas’ peopling, putting all histories of forced and voluntary migration on equal footing while, importantly, decentering Europe spatially and discursively.¹⁶



Figure 6. Anastásio de Sant’Anna (Bahia, Brazil, active 18th–early 19th century). “Do emisferio superior da America”, Map 1 in the *Guia de Caminhantes*, 1816. CAM.04,003—Cartografia, Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Sant’Anna’s map of Brazil, second in the *Guia*, further suggests his inspiration from much earlier works (Figure 8). Most maps of Brazil at this period were oriented with north at the top, while also outlining the Atlantic coastline and fleshing out the country’s interior: moves reflective of a kind of cartographic proto-nationalism that sought to form Brazil into an identifiable territorial boundary prior to independence in 1822. Such maps helped to render the nation as what Sumathi Ramaswamy (2014, p. 420) calls a “geo-body” necessary for would-be citizens to “see” the country politically and, in turn, to socially attach themselves to it. This scheme was then reproduced on a global range of engraved and teaching maps after Brazilian independence (Figure 9). Sant’Anna’s Brazil breaks from this schema, orienting west at the top, a change that neither formed part of Sant’Anna’s corrective efforts nor would have been reproduced in any contemporary work. As Kantor (2016, p. 159) also points out, this style harkens to the sixteenth and seventeenth century, where European—especially Dutch—colonial cartographers commonly oriented Brazil with west at the top (Figure 10).



Figure 7. Johann Digler (designer) and Leonhard Heckenhaur (engraver). Frontispiece to Heinrich Scherer, *Geographia artificialis* (Munich, 1703). Hand colored, 23.6 × 18 cm. on sheet 27.2 × 20 cm. G3200 [1703]. S34, Glen McLaughlin Map Collection of California as an Island, David Rumsey Map Center, Stanford University Libraries.

Sant'Anna also reduces the size of the Atlantic Ocean so that the west African coast peeks through the bottom right. This required shifting of the spatial dynamics from the planisphere suggests the move is intentional. This style of showing the tip of Africa with Brazil emerged in the 1500s. Common through the middle of the eighteenth century, this style emphasized Brazil and Africa's proximity to imply the facility of trafficking humans and goods between them. In some cases, the link was explicit: the frontispiece to French trader Jean Barbot's 1688 travelogue concerning his time in West Africa depicts the ocean as a connector between Brazil and West Africa, while two Black figures—esthetic, celebratory archetypes of the slave trade—flank it (Figure 11). This singular framing of Brazil and

West Africa had effectively disappeared by the early nineteenth century. Is Sant’Anna here continuing to extol the slave trade as the backbone of Brazil’s economy—potentially a point that could further distance his racial subjectivity from associations with slave status? Might he also be subtly referencing Brazil’s strong African presence, something further suggested by the oversize importance given to Africa in the planisphere, where the continent almost dominates a map purportedly focused on the Americas (Figure 6)? And if so, how does this detail operate in tension with the scene at Jiquitaia, which effectively refuses an image of Blackness tied to Atlantic slavery or diasporic African origins?



Figure 8. Anastásio de Sant’Anna (Bahia, Brazil, active 18th–early 19th century). “De todo o Brazil”, Map 2 in the *Guia de Caminhantes*, 1816. CAM.04,003—Cartografia, Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Sant’Anna’s map of northeastern Brazil may further testify to his work’s historical references and the multilayered histories of diaspora that inform it (Figure 12). Again, shifting typical orientation conventions by depicting northeastern Brazil with south at the top, Sant’Anna includes a critical detail: at the bottom of the map, he paints a small black building and labels it “Tapera de Angola; or Palmares” (Figure 13). Palmares, a common name of the collection of maroon polities that existed in present-day Alagoas state during most of the seventeenth century, is an atypical location to be referenced on a map of this period. Historian Marc A. Hertzman (2024, pp. 196–97) notes that only one other known map from the colonial period—a map of Pernambuco captaincy commissioned in 1766—names Palmares.

Moreover, the *Guia*’s pairing of “Tapera de Angola” and “Palmares” is unique in the history of cartography. “Tapera de Angola” only appears on one other known map: at the far bottom right of Dutch cartographer Joan Blaeu’s oft-reproduced 1662 map of the captaincy of Pernambuco, depicting its occupation by the Dutch in the mid-seventeenth century (Figures 14 and 15). Sant’Anna’s use of this phrasing suggests he used Blaeu’s map specifically as a source of inspiration, nearly a century-and-a-half after its production (and in turn further supports the idea that Sant’Anna is taking broad inspiration from seventeenth-century Dutch Brazilian visual culture).



Figure 9. A Map of Brazil, now called New Portugal, published in Carey's General Atlas, Improved And Enlarged (Philadelphia: M. Carey and Son, 1818). Engraving, 45 × 36 cm. P 732, David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.



Figure 10. Hendrik Hondius (Flemish, 1573–1650). *Accuratissima Brasilæ Tabula*. Published in Joannes de Laet, *Historie ofte Iaerlijk Verhael* (Leiden, 1644). Engraving, 37.8 × 48.5 cm. F644 L742h, John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island.

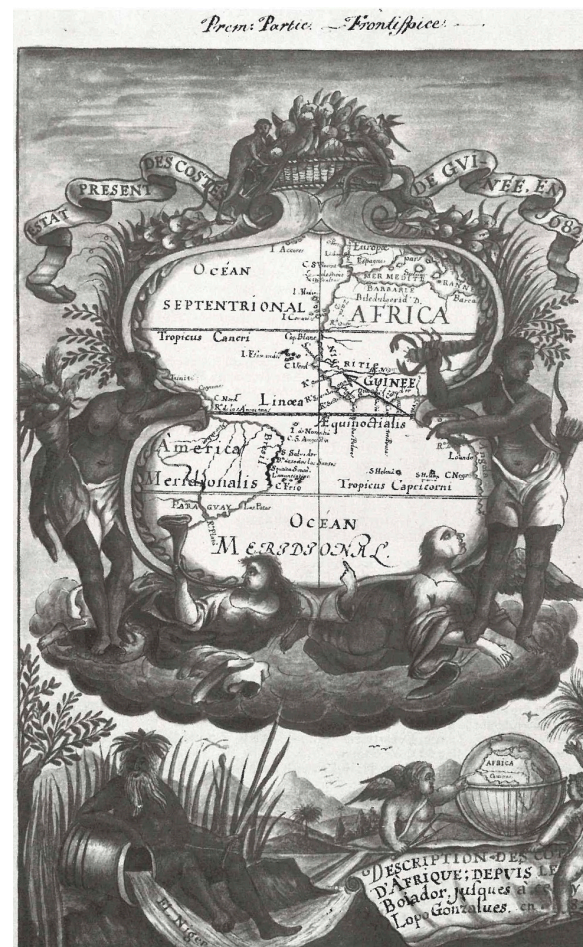


Figure 11. Jean Barbot (French, 1655–1712). Untitled frontispiece to the journals of Jean Barbot, 1688. Original at the National Archives, Kew, MPI 1/631. Reproduced from P.E.H. Hair, Adam Jones, and Robin Law (eds.), *Barbot on Guinea: The Writings of Jean Barbot on West Africa, 1678–1712*, Volume 2 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1992).

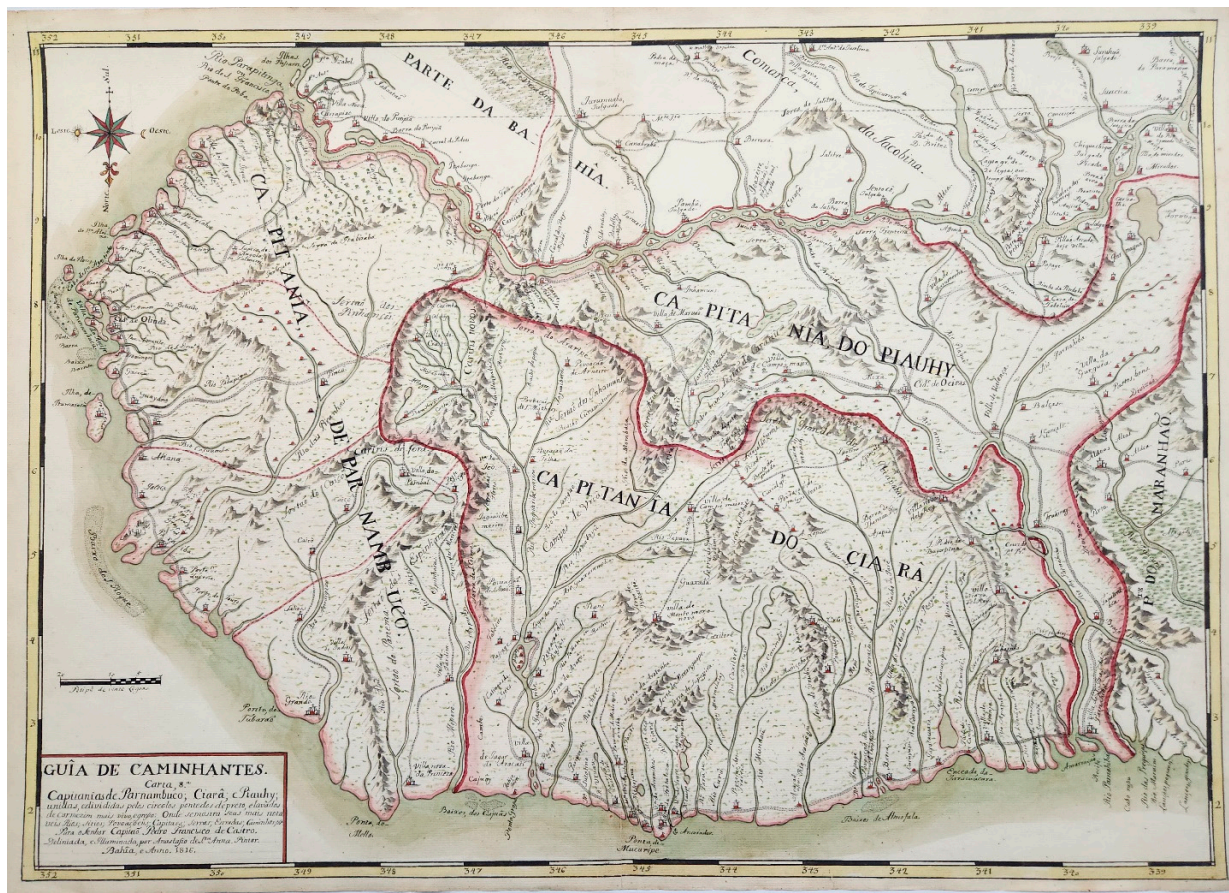


Figure 12. Anastásio de Sant’Anna (Bahia, Brazil, active 18th–early 19th century). “Capitanias de Pernambuco, Ceará, e Piauíy”, Map 8 in the *Guia de Caminhantes*, 1816. CAM.04,003—Cartografia, Fundação Biblioteca Nacional, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.



Figure 13. Detail of Figure 12.

Naming Palmares in this way may have carried special resonance for Sant’Anna’s evocation of Brazil’s constitutive Afro-Indigenity. On one level, “Tapera de Angola, or Palmares”, as Hertzman (2024, p. 38) notes, brings into intimate relation phonemes from three languages: “tapera”, a Tupi word referring to a ruined or destroyed settlement; “Angola”, the central African polity strongly associated with Palmares, and the region commonly cited as its cultural and philosophical origin point; and “Palmares”, the Portuguese term for palm trees. Sant’Anna uniquely intermingles these sounds on the map, as if linguistically reproducing the kind of multiracial egalitarianism painted on the *Guias*’s frontispiece. Beyond the multivocality Sant’Anna’s naming provides, we cannot know how Sant’Anna understood the words’ meaning. Did he know, for example, that “tapera” referred to an abandoned settlement? What might this have meant for his evocation of “Angola” and the suggestion that this African polity, or at least its memory, existed or was even at home in Brazil—yet another iteration of the continent’s vibrant proximity to, and co-constitution of, the Brazilian state? If Sant’Anna did understand the Palmares as abandoned or destroyed, what might he suggest by re-naming it here and connoting the potential for regeneration and new settlements in the area, maroon and colonial alike, long after Palmares’s destruction? And finally, how might we put this point in conversation with Sant’Anna’s insistence that previous cartographers had made “imprecise” maps of the interior of the state? Why did he make a specific choice to emphasize this historic terminology, and thus bring into sharp relief the coeval histories of Black, Indigenous, and white European diasporas? As elsewhere, Sant’Anna’s work provides few clear answers. Yet, perhaps it is precisely his emphasis on multilayered, multi-referential ambiguity, and the strategic intermingling of colonial, Black, and Indigenous epistemologies that provides the *Guia* its force.

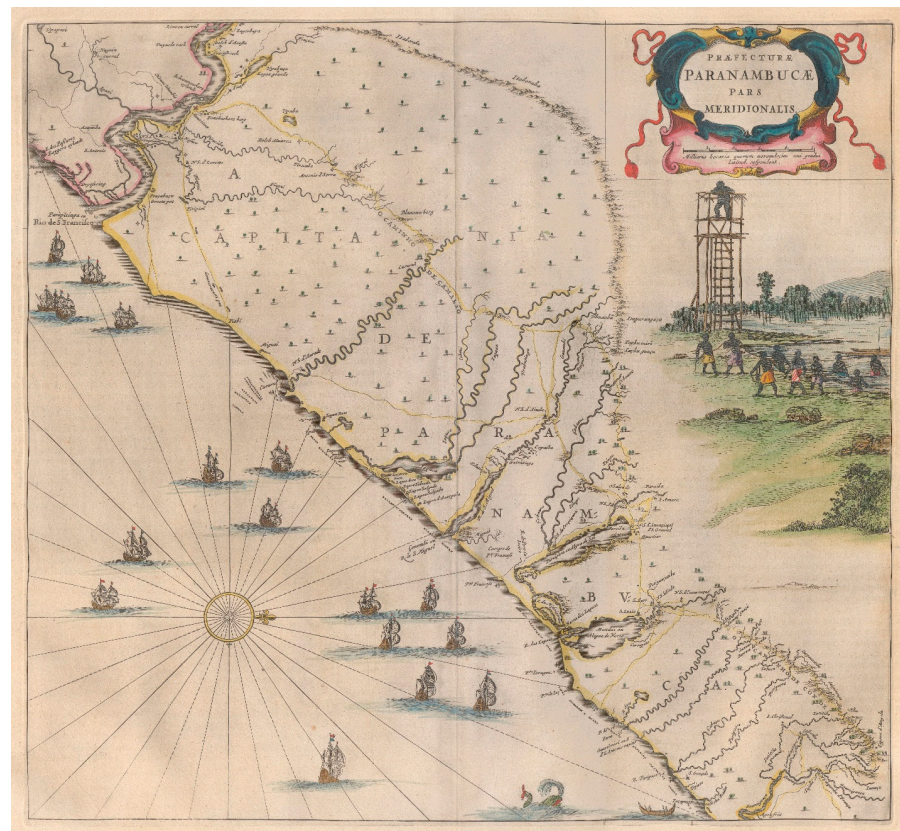


Figure 14. Joan Blaeu (1596–1673). Praefecturae Paranambucae Pars Meridionalis. Published in *Atlas Maior Sive Cosmographia Blaviana qua solum, salum, coelum accuratissime describuntur*, Volume 11. (Amsterdam: J. Blaeu, 1662). Hand-colored engraving, 42 × 45 cm. van der Krogt 2:601 [-3].11 (20), David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.



Figure 15. Detail of Figure 14.

4. Conclusion: On Maps and Origins

“To explain [one’s] origins in relation to a modern political map”, writes the geographer Chérie N. Rivers (2022, p. 31), “is to accept a specific construction of space and time that imprisons [oneself] in the geography of global power”. For Rivers (2022, pp. 29–45), the line drawing and mapmaking of longstanding colonial relations presumes a geographic and spatial fixity that attempts to force and imprison racial subjectivity—especially Blackness—into a kind of essentialized boundedness and, in so doing concretize its utility for political and economic exploitation. Anastácio de Sant’Anna worked in the wake of cartographic projects of the colonial Americas, which resonate deeply with Rivers’ argument about attempts made to codify and subdue racial identities in the service of proto-nationalist imaginaries, slavery economies, and military conquests. Yet, as “real” maps attempted to instantiate racial hierarchy, practices of Black fugitivity and independence threw them into ontological crisis (King 2019, p. 75). As outlined at the beginning of this essay, the work of McKittrick (2006, 2011) and other theorists of Black Geographies show the consistent inadequacy of maps produced in the service of colonial projects, either by intentionally obscuring forms of resistance embedded in the very landscapes they represented, or by failing to incorporate—as a function of their medium—the manifold processes by which those in diaspora exist and move in, and remember the world.

In its foregrounding of Black and Indigenous histories and placenames, in its evocations of Africa’s proximity to Brazil, and in its presentations of Blackness’ Indigeneity to Bahia, we might see in Sant’Anna’s *Guia* an effort to visualize those very forms of place- and space-making obscured by colonial military cartography; to, in other words, re-map and re-animate Black and Indigenous lives beyond the confines of the “modern political map”, as Rivers outlines. The *Guia* explores and disentangles the historical timelines, diasporic histories, and racial imaginaries that pushed its maker to occupy a subjective position in the racial strata of the Portuguese Empire and the nascent Brazilian state. In this way, perhaps the *Guia* functions less as a political statement than as Sant’Anna’s attempt to work through the contours of a racial and political schema that asked him to choose

between his mixed-race ancestry and his patriotism (Gilroy 1993), or between his Blackness and his rootedness in and patriotism to Bahia. The *Guia* interrogates the extent to which cartography may not erase, but rather could foreground, a vision of Black history as part of the state's geo-body. The *Guia* may not signify "an outright rejection of the colonial geographic and cartographic project as much as an underscoring of its inadequacy", which might "distinguish patriotic art's investment in the map form from the state's command mapmaking ventures" (Ramaswamy 2014, pp. 423, 425). Through his genre-bending experimentations across painting and cartography, Sant'Anna attempted to rethink the genealogy of cartography in his homeland, all while asserting his—and other pardos'—sense of belonging and centrality to it. Though the *Guia*'s seeming contradictions and ambiguities offer contemporary readers few specific clues, Sant'Anna's atlas elucidates powerful questions for historians of cartography interested in the ways territorial possession, mapping, racial subjectivity, and national identity intersect in the Americas.

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Notes

- 1 See, for example, Hawthorne and Lewis (2023), a critical state-of-the-field work in which material 'maps' go almost unmentioned.
- 2 On Du Bois' maps, see Wilson (2018). Far less has been written about Jefferson; see Taylor (2022).
- 3 The artist signs the *Guia* with the surname 'S.ta Anna'. Adan and Kantor (2021), utilizing contemporary Brazilian orthography, transcribe it as "Sant'Anna". I continue that practice here for the sake of consistency.
- 4 While the *Guia* has been mentioned or cited numerous times in Brazilian literature, the two main essays to analyze it—both foundational to the present research—are Kantor (2016) and Adan and Kantor (2021).
- 5 The *Guia* contains thirteen maps, numbered sequentially 1–12 and 20. It is unclear if numbers 13–19 have been lost or simply were never produced.
- 6 Arquivo Nacional de Torre do Tombo (Lisbon), Inquisição de Lisboa, Processo 7037.
- 7 Arquivo Nacional de Torre do Tombo (Lisbon), Inquisição de Lisboa, Processo 7037, f. 3r. See also Adan and Kantor (2021, p. 121).
- 8 On the social organization of professional *irmandades*, see Scarano (1978, pp. 24–25). As historian João José Reis (2003a, pp. 43, 45) notes, nearly four in five freedmen who left probate records in Bahia between 1790 and 1830 belonged to an *irmandade*, and often multiple ones, that were organized around professions.
- 9 On Jesuit cartography in Brazil, see Altic (2022, pp. 257–87).
- 10 Original text: "Jiquitaya; Praya onde foi a maior força do antigo comercio com os Indios da Bahia".
- 11 Original text: "Quirimure; Antigo nome Gentilico da Bahia, e lugar onde se fundou a Cidade de S. Salvador".
- 12 This information was gathered from the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (TASTD), <https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/database> (accessed on 15 September 2024).
- 13 Between 1580 and 1640, the empires of Spain and Portugal were united in a dynastic union. Portugal and Spain remained independent states.
- 14 On the place of pardos in colonial Brazil, see also Pessoa (2013) and Viana (2007).
- 15 Original text: "Do emisferio superior da America, mostrando o seu horizonte, onde se verá os primeiros, e mais povoadores delle, de que partes vierão; se da Asia, como escrevem varios autores, vejase as partes da China, Japão, e Tartaria, que ficão ao Oriente da India na mesma Asia; e os que vierão das partes da Europa, e Africa, geralmente hé sabido".

- ¹⁶ Sant’Anna’s planisphere plays with geographical and spatial relationships throughout. Abomey, the historic capital of the Kingdom of Dahomey, is located nearly in the Sahara; and the city of Xavi—capital and main trading port of the kingdom of Hueda, which had been conquered by Dahomey in 1724—sits in what in 2024 is the interior of Cameroon, hundreds of miles from its actual location. In the Americas, such changes are even more stark: Sant’Anna places New York south of Philadelphia, and Annapolis (Maryland, USA) in Nova Scotia, Canada.

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