Early Settlement of Portuguese America

Thomas E. Bassett
University of California

Abstract

The Portuguese Empire expanded over five continents and endured for nearly six centuries. Beginning with small forts and trading posts in Africa in the early fifteenth century to the formal handover of Macau to China in 1999, Portugal reigned over one of the longest lasting modern empires in the world. The Portuguese foray into the Americas was with the colony of Brazil and was a happenstance because a Portuguese captain accidentally landed in South America. What ensued was limited claims, multiple attacks from other European Empires, and the Portuguese quickly establishing the Donatary Captaincy system to colonize Brazil. This system of colonization was successful in the small Atlantic Islands the Portuguese colonized decades before, but was a near complete failure in Brazil. This paper shows how the Donatary Captaincies failed because of four reasons: (1) the decision to use Donatary Captaincies was reactionary; (2) individual captains assumed the initial capital cost of colonization without surplus to maintain their claims; (3) there were no residency laws for captains to be in the colonies; and (4) continual defensive attacks by indigenous populations hindered colonial growth. By providing the historical background and planning decisions about early Portuguese America, the entire story of "discovery" through Donatary Captaincies to a singular Governorate General adds to the understanding of early Portuguese colonization in Brazil. This paper contributes to the literature by providing a review of secondary sources regarding the early Portuguese colonization through the lens of built environment in English.

Keywords

Portuguese Empire, Brazil, colonization, built environment

How to cite

Bassett, Thomas E.; "Early Settlement of Portuguese America". In Carola Hein (ed.), *International Planning History Society Proceedings*, 19th IPHS Conference, City-Space-Transformation, TU Delft, 5 - 6 July, 2022, TU Delft Open, 2022.

DOI: 10.7480/iphs.2022.1.6511

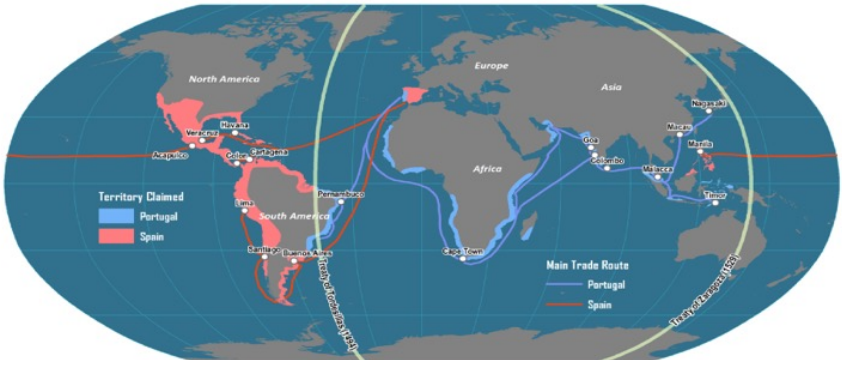

Fig. 1. The World after the Treaties of Tordesillas (1494) and Zaragosa (1529) (Olson-Raymer n.d.)

INTRODUCTION

The Portuguese Empire expanded over five continents and endured for nearly six centuries. Beginning with small forts and trading posts in Africa in the early fifteenth century to the formal handover of Macau to China in 1999, Portugal reigned over one of the longest lasting modern empires in the world. Compared to other European Colonizing Powers, is there something particular to the Portuguese colonial city design? Some scholars have proposed that the Portuguese were able to maintain an empire for so many centuries because they embraced malleability and flexibility. Instead of conquering vast, contiguous land, the trading port system had its advantages. The Portuguese were able to abandon those posts that were not viable, but also mobilize resources among them in order to defend and keep the empire intact (Bethencourt and Sousa 2000; Newitt 2001). A sociological view suggests that this longevity stems from *Lusotropicalismo* (Freyre 1971). This theory proposes that because of Portugal's relatively warmer climate compared to the rest of Europe and white Portuguese colonizers' miscegenation with enslaved Africans and indigenous people, Portugal was the "best" colonizer because their people were more prepared and humane to colonize the tropics. Unpacking this problematic theory is out of the scope of this paper, but Portuguese exceptionalism, or perhaps particularism, during colonization is integral to this study as well as future studies.

Focusing on the built environment, I will explore how the Portuguese built their early colonial settlements. Although the Portuguese engaged in distinct historical periods and locations of colonization, this paper will consider Portuguese America. This early story of colonization is marred with foreign competition and failed forms of land distribution which led the Portuguese to establish formally planned cities by the mid-sixteenth century. Thus, the relatively short span from 1500-1549 is the setting for this early colonization period where the Portuguese expanded into South America with their singular American colony: Brazil.

During the misnamed Age of Discovery, the Portuguese were the first European power to set out and claim land for their empire. Starting with the capture of Ceuta in Northern Africa in 1415 and then onto the Atlantic islands of the Azores, Cape Verde, and Madeira, Portugal

continued to sail out from their prominent Western European location setting up a network of ports and forts for trade and further exploration with the goal of reaching India to trade for spices. These first settlements were merely unplanned interventions, focusing primarily on the construction of a fort that could also resupply Portuguese sailors on their journey to Asia (Nunes Silva 2015). The Portuguese did not fully embrace the goal of a settler colony in these first invasions to Africa and India, but occupied small parcels of land or islands along sailing routes from Portugal, along Africa into India (Vasconcelos, 2016). With European interest growing in conquering the Americas, and the accompanying competition and claims from the Spanish, Pope Julius II brokered the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494). Along with the Treaty of Zaragoza (1529), these two treaties effectively split the world into two domains for exploitation, seen in Figure 1. The Treaty of Tordesillas established a dividing line which was a meridian in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean about three-hundred and seventy leagues to the west of Cape Verde, which was Portuguese, and about the same amount of leagues east of Hispaniola in the Caribbean, which Christopher Columbus had just recently claimed for Spain. Everything to the east of this meridian (including the eastern tip of South America, plus Africa and the Indian Ocean) was for Portugal to exploit, while those lands to the west (the majority of the Americas and the Pacific Ocean) was for Spain. A few decades later Spain and Portugal were disputing Pacific claims, and the Treaty of Zaragoza settled that disagreement along a meridian in the Pacific Ocean. After these treaties, the Portuguese, under King Manuel I, proclaimed to rule everything including the open sea, which was now part of the Portuguese Empire (Newitt 2001). This claim was unsurprisingly hard to enforce but more posturing than actual rule and speaks to the Portuguese's conception of empire.

PORTUGUESE AMERICA

After the Papal negotiation, a Portuguese fleet invaded South America in 1500 under the command of Pedro Cabral. This voyage was initially headed to Southern Africa, but storms threw off the fleet's course and the ships arrived in the eastern part of the South American continent. This first touchpoint for the Portuguese was quick simply to claim the land allowed under the new treaty and the Portuguese erected a cross before returning to Lisbon. The myth tells the story that two convicts from Cabral's fleet decided to stay on the beautiful beaches, while the rest of the command returned to Portugal (Green, Langland, and Moritz Schwarz 2019) The newly claimed land was plentiful in valuable, red-fleshed brazilwood to dye textiles, and the Portuguese uncreatively named the new colony Brazil. During this early time of colonization, India was the most important location for Portuguese trade and thus Brazil was a colony for the extraction of the red-dye wood as well as a place to resupply for ships headed around the Cape of Good Hope in Southern Africa headed to India. The initial Portuguese colonization in Brazil was similar to their *feitoria* system which they established along the African coasts. A *feitoria*, or factory, was a flexible space to serve as a market, warehouse, customs house, and support site for navigation. With increased competition from other European interests, militarization of the *feitorias* was increasingly important to establish a secure Portuguese claim in Brazil (Fernandes 2008). At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the Portuguese were more interested in India than the Americas. The Portuguese viewed Brazil as a place of raw mate-

rial accumulation rather than settler colony; these early, littoral settlements set the structure and more importantly the location for later cities, not establishing interior settlements for two hundred more years when mining gold became more important to the colonial economy (Paquette 2019b).

Three decades after the arrival of Cabral, the Portuguese Crown was still struggling to establish a true colony in the Americas through multiple *feitorias* because of various other European countries invading Brazil. Particularly the French and Dutch, as well as the Spanish and English, were all making incursions in Brazil, and the Portuguese Crown sought to change the form of colonization to ensure a more solid claim (Harrigan 2009). The Portuguese decided to use a form of land distribution and granting they had employed to grant land after the expulsion of the Moors from Portugal as well as when first colonizing the Atlantic Islands: the Donatary Captaincy. Portugal had a small population and had financial challenges funding colonization in the Americas as the country had invested so heavily in India. The Donatary Captaincy system shifted the upfront capital costs of colonization to private individuals, or captains, who then were able to administer their land. Since the land was a royal gift, the Crown would still receive money in the form of a tax on economic activity in the captaincies. In the Atlantic Islands, this form of colonization worked well because there was limited land, where Brazil with an enormous land mass presented new challenges.

In 1534, the King of Portugal, Dom João III, decided not to directly rule Brazil for financial and capacity issues as the majority of Portuguese resources was focused on India which was a vice-royalty with all the bureaucracy of the Crown (Vasconcelos, 2016). Thus, the Crown divided the entire colony of Brazil into fifteen Donatary Captaincies shown in Figure 2.

Dom João III drew up the captaincies as strips of land parallel to the equator running from the Atlantic coast to the Tordesillas Line, after which the land was effectively for Spain. The original north-south height of each captaincy was supposed to be fifty leagues, but mostly the boundaries followed natural features such as rivers allowing for varying sizes of each captaincy (Cabral 2016). Each captaincy was headed by a captain, who was able to administer the land as he saw fit. Captains tended to be one of three types of people. First was the petty nobility, as those members of the higher noble classes were not willing to risk their established fortunes in Portugal on a colonial project (Schwartz 2011). The second group were those men who had helped conquer India and Africa, military conquistadores who received a captaincy as payment. The final group of captains were "creatures of the king," which were mostly educated bureaucrats and other members of the upper-echelon of royal administration (Roper & van Ruymbeke, 2007, p 31).

The King granted a *doação* or gift of land to an individual who then had tall orders to accomplish within the captaincy. Different from the medieval fief, the king's *doação* was not dependent on service, but rather was a reward for services past, present, or future. The captain was to populate, defend, and develop the territory while ensuring the integrity of the catholic religion in the absence of a religious order (Paquette 2019a). "Besides equipping a fleet, he was responsible for finding financiers, colonists, and soldiers, for mobilizing a trustworthy entourage—indeed, for selling some or all of his assets to fund part of the expedition—while

securing on credit some of the arms and equipment necessary for a long-term installation in Brazil" (Roper & van Ruymbeke, 2007, p. 30). Many captains took on severe amounts of debt to finance the original voyage to Brazil, without any money coming from the Crown. What the captain received though was the ability to grant small tracts of land (*sesmarias*) to and levy taxes on the colonists within his captaincy. The captaincy was hereditary where the first son of the captain would inherit the land and it was in the family for perpetuity. There was no royal presence overseeing any of the captaincies in Brazil. There were "no armies, but organization and control of urban and rural militias; no royal capital, but, in contrast, emergence of small territorial capitals serving as the seats of provincial governments staffed by relatives and clients of the grantees" (Roper & van Ruymbeke, 2007, p. 27). The system was one of private enterprise, relieving the Crown of any initial financial burden, but allowing for royal profit accumulation. "The process of effective colonization of Brazil was therefore less the outcome of a long-term imperial drive to territorialize overseas dominions, than the pragmatic answer and institutional adaptation to practical challenges" (de Carvalho, 2015, p. 132). Portugal needed to colonize Brazil quickly to stave off foreign invasions and implemented an existing framework that was successful elsewhere in the empire.

During the beginning of the sixteenth century when the Portuguese Crown granted the captaincies, the main economic activity in Brazil was still brazilwood, extracted for its red dye. This trade became unsustainable because there was more competition for the trade in general (especially from the French and Dutch moving into Portuguese territory), much of the Atlantic Rainforest was depleted from harvesting the brazilwood, and trading with the indigenous populations for the wood was not as easy as the indigenous populations had already amassed rudimentary tools through decades of trade and demanded higher valued items (Dodge 2018). Thus, the new captains and colonists took to sugar cultivation as the soil was high in nutrients and relatively easy to grow with a high profit on the market. The Portuguese had already had success with sugar cultivation in the Atlantic islands, and transposing the crop to Brazil was not difficult (Vasconcelos, 2016). In order to cultivate this new crop, colonists needed large tracts of land for planting, new mills for processing the cane juice, and labor to run the entire production. This time was when the Portuguese began to forcibly import Africans to be enslaved labor for sugar production. All of this production occurred on the *engenhos*, or literally mill or machine, but the word *engenho* came to encompass the entire plantation with its main house for the ruling family, chapel, buildings for sugar processing, as well as smaller huts for the enslaved laborers. The development pattern was isolated and although some *engenhos* were home to nearly fifty people, the populations never became substantial enough nor had the corresponding built environment and land uses to become a town or city. The economy had moved from one based on extraction of brazilwood to a sugar plantation complex, which was "an 'archipelago' system consisting of islets of development, each linked to a trading post" (Roper & van Ruymbeke, 2007, p. 38). Each *engenho* acted independently and then transported its sugar to the port for exportation, but the sugar economy did grow the colony's population because of the means of production. Enslaved labor was needed for planting, harvesting, processing, and transporting the sugar, skilled labor was needed to process the sugar cane and construct the buildings of the *engenho*, and a literate labor force was needed to manage and administer the entire production.

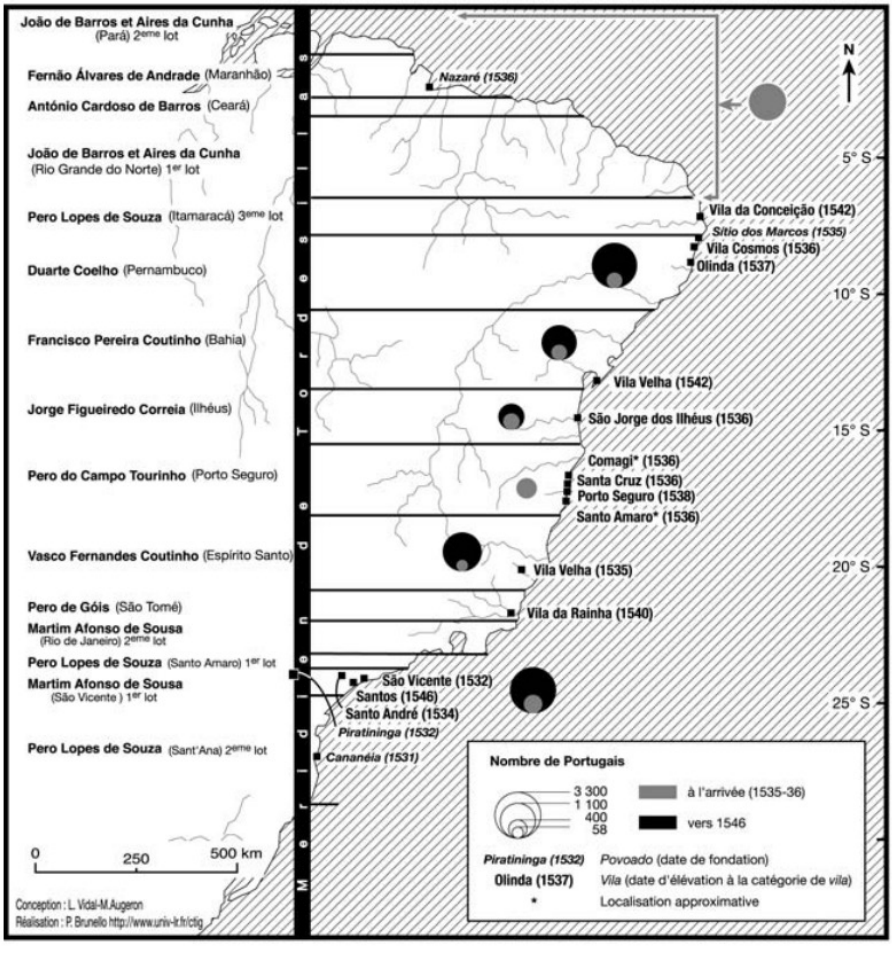

Fig. 2. Donatary Captaincies in Brazil, 1534 (Roper and van Ruymbeke 2007).

PROBLEMS AND SHIFT

Unfortunately, the Donatary Captaincy system did not entirely achieve the intended goal of becoming prosperous new Portuguese colonies. Perhaps the most important intention of the captaincies was to fend off any foreign invasions that would threaten the Portuguese claim in the Americas. This goal to thwart foreign advances was successful, but indigenous populations who initially traded with the Portuguese eventually presented challenges to the colonists. For the indigenous population who was not killed by European diseases or deadly force, the Portuguese forced them into enslaved labor and forced conversion to Christianity (Summerhill 2012). Reacting to the atrocities committed by the Portuguese, many indigenous

tribes attacked the captaincies and even expelled colonists from their claimed land. Only the captaincies of Pernambuco in the Brazil's Northeast and São Vicente in the Southeast were successful at establishing financially stable colonies. These two captaincies, with the addition of Ilhéus and Porto Seguro, were the only four Captaincies to survive past 1549, while the remaining eleven became abandoned or severely underperformed.

In order to reestablish prominence and develop Brazil, in 1548, just fourteen years after the captaincies' establishment, Dom João III decided to create a Governorate General of Brazil to directly rule and centralize power over the colony. Those captaincies that had been abandoned were completely subsumed into a single colony under the Governorate General, while others, Pernambuco, São Vicente, Ilhéus, and Porto Seguro continued to exist but were now provincial administrative districts within the colony of Brazil. The decision to invest more into Brazil was also driven by a decrease in Portuguese trade in India as more European powers entered that market in Asia, so the King wanted to create new lucrative opportunities in his new American colony (Fausto 2006). The first Governor General, Tomé de Sousa, arrived in the abandoned northeast Captaincy of Bahia dos Todos Sanots, with one-thousand people to set up the new capital of Salvador. Salvador had been a Jesuit settlement, but the area would now be the center of the entire colony of Brazil. The Governor General established three important positions to rule the colony: Chief Ombudsman, responsible for judicial issues and applying Portuguese law in the colony; Treasurer, responsible for the collection of taxes and the colonial budget; and the Captain General, responsible for the defense of the colony from both foreign and indigenous attacks (Fausto 2006). The centralized, bureaucratic organization of the colony was much more robust and directly controlled through the Crown.

The coastal location of the first colonial capital, Salvador, was strategic for two reasons: it was close to the productive sugar plantations of the northeast and also the local topography provided protection. In this manner, the city was able to receive enslaved Africans arriving from West Africa to work on the plantations because there was insufficient indigenous labor. Because the Portuguese founded Salvador deliberately to function as the administrative capital of the colony, the Portuguese Crown financed and planned the city. Salvador is located nearly two-hundred feet up a hill for defensive purposes but also to exert visual control over the region, and follows a two-leveled urbanization form that the Portuguese employed during the middle-ages and Renaissance, evidenced by the layout of Lisbon. Mimicking its imperial capital, Salvador has a *Cidade Alta* (Upper City) laid out in a gridiron pattern, which was home to the colonial administration as well as residences of the local elites. Below, in the *Cidade Baixa* (Lower City), the narrow strip of flat land housed the port, commercial areas, and residences of the lower class (Nobre 2002). For more than two centuries, Salvador continued to flourish as the capital of the colony, but for a combination of reasons, the Portuguese moved the capital to Rio de Janeiro in 1763. This new capital port would be closer to the recently discovered gold in the interior as well as establish a more strategic defense against other invading European powers in the south of the colony.

One of the most important areas of Salvador and many early colonial Brazilian cities was the *pelourinho* or pillory. Today, the entire historic center neighborhood of Salvador is still called *Pelourinho*, showing the legacy of the pillory square. The *praça* or square in colonial Portu-

guese cities was not unlike the Spanish *plaza*, but not as regularized. The Spanish manner of colonization was based on a set of codes named the Laws of the Indies, which provided an order to how they would colonize conquered lands. First implemented in Santo Domingo in present day Dominican Republic and updated several times over the sixteenth century, this set of laws specified how the Spanish were to conduct themselves on their new lands. The laws also dictated how to layout the new cities they were founding as they territorially expanded through the Americas and beyond. The laws were extremely specific regarding the location of any new town in "an elevated and healthy location" and the placement of specific buildings (cathedral or church and government buildings) around a plaza with colonnades and straight streets stemming off it to form a gridiron plan (Crouch & Mundigo, 1977). Therefore, the Spanish *plazas* were much more similar among the various Spanish colonial cities, where the Portuguese *praças* were more numerous in individual cities and unique across the empire (Godfrey 1991). The *praça* expressed both control and order for civic and ecclesiastical authority rather than the center of the local elite. In Brazil, the elite were large land holders cultivating sugar far from the city's *praça* diminishing the prominence of the square and city more generally (Curtis 2000). The pillories were mostly classical columns to show imperial power, but also were sites of executions and gallows.

A common conception is that the Spanish were very organized and orderly when planning and founding their cities compared to the Portuguese who were more flexible without a centralized planning effort (Clark et al., 1995; Hart, 2003; Medieros et al., 2009; Schürmann, 1999; Socolow & Johnson, 1981). It is true that the Laws of the Indies stipulated many specific aspects of urban planning for the Spanish, but for easier trade, the Portuguese mainly founded cities on the coast which had varying topography not allowing the colonists to plan and build each city in the same manner. Also, the Spanish tended to settle more inland and encountered more established indigenous settlements which they destroyed and rebuilt following the Laws of the Indies, settling in secure, protected locations previously chosen by the indigenous populations. Compared with Spanish America, in Portuguese America, there were practically no major indigenous settlements for the Portuguese to overtake, and in combination with the supremacy of the plantation economy, Brazilian colonial cities were not centers of society like they were in Spanish America (Schürmann 1999; Socolow and Johnson 1981).

Nonetheless, the Portuguese did implement *Ordenações do Reino*, or Royal Ordinances, and *Códigos de Posturas Municipais*, or Municipal Posture Codes, under King Dom Manuel I in 1512. The Royal Ordinances were very specific about the architecture insisting on certain materials, massing, locations, and even size of windows and overhangs for the buildings in the new Portuguese colonies. The Municipal Posture Codes were mostly concerned with standardizing weights and measures, but also had the purview of urban services like street cleaning as well as the basis of real estate transactions and construction permitting (Matoso 2014). The result from these ordinances and codes was that architecturally, across the Portuguese Empire and within Brazil, the cities looked very similar on the building-to-building level, yet the overall built environment was much more varied and unique responding to the local setting and topography. As Brazil continued into the following centuries, more centralized and unified urban planning entered as an important aspect of city development (Godfrey 1991).

INTERIOR EXPANSION

The following quote appeared in what many scholars consider the first book on the history of Brazil, written by Friar Vicente do Salvador in 1627, simply entitled *História do Brasil* (History of Brazil):

> *"I do not seek out Brazil's vast interior, because as of now, no one has walked upon it. This neglect is due to the Portuguese, who are great land conquerors, but do not take full advantage of their spoils. They are content to scramble along the beach like crabs" (Vicente do Salvador 1627).*

Writing more than a century after the Portuguese sailor Cabral first landed in South America, Salvador's observations covered many topics ranging from flora and fauna to climate and indigenous people. He constructed the inchoate narrative about the origins of the country that would become Brazil. His notions that the Portuguese colonists were happy to remain on the coast has become a reality in contemporary Brazil, a country of continental size, where 70% of the 212M Brazilians live within two hours of the beach (IBGE 2010). The population imbalance of today produces vast disparities where the population along the coast enjoy a higher standard of living compared to the interior. In between these two areas, a jungle, thicker than any European had seen before, divided the country. Nature was the impediment to inward expansion. First there was the *Mata Atlântica* the coastal, tropical rainforest along the Atlantic Ocean, which also paralleled the *Serra do Mar*, a coastal range of mountains keeping the population by the beach. Upon the highlands there was yet another jungle, the Amazon Rainforest, much larger in scale and another obstacle to overcome or tame in order to occupy the entirety of the country. In addition, the indigenous populations did not give up without a fight as colonists made invasions into their land.

Because of all of these challenges and colonization styles of extraction, the Portuguese settlement of Brazil developed mainly on the coast, but the first major entrance to the hinterlands was conducted through armed incursions led by groups of men in search of riches starting in the sixteenth century lasting through the eighteenth century. These invasions were called *bandeiras* (flags), and those who led them, *bandeirantes*. The English translation for *bandeirantes* is literally flag-carriers, but colloquially they are known as explorers, adventure hunters, bandits, although most commonly referred to as pathfinders. Instead of permanently settling land, the main objective of the *bandeirantes* was to build paths or a network of paths in the interior to extract mineral wealth, particularly gold, silver, and precious stones but also abduct indigenous people to be sold to slave traders on the coast. Small, temporary, mining settlements did develop, but as soon as the mineral or precious stone that was being extracted became scarce, the miners would abandon the place. Several *bandeiras* could simultaneously occur and continue for multiple years.

The majority of *bandeiras* originated in the present-day state of São Paulo. These expeditions of Paulistas (residents of the São Paulo region) were privately funded, always led by a Portuguese man or European descendent Brazilian and were staunchly Catholic endeavors. A chaplain was always present in the entourage to perform last rites for those who died in the field,

but also to proselytize to captive indigenous people who were not slaughtered by the *bandeirantes*. Enslaved people could also accompany the group acting as porters along with mules, and because of the dense vegetation, the expeditions were conducted on foot. There are few sources that describe these journeys, and most recount the same story. Many accounts depict armed *bandeirantes* attacking native villages and setting fire to their gardens and dwellings all while attempting to find mineral wealth and indigenous people to enslave (Dutra e Silva 2018). An anonymous letter sent to the King of Portugal in the 1690s changed the narrative of the *bandeirantes* from one of violence to heroism:

> *"Your Majesty could make good use of the Paulistas by honoring them and granting them concessions. Awards and interest will make men take great risks. And these are the sort of men who will venture all through the backlands. They are always tramping through it, with no more sustenance than forest game: animals, snakes, lizards, wild fruit, and roots of several different trees. They do not mind spending years on end in the backlands...And even if these Paulistas, owing to some fracases among one another, might seem unruly, no one can deny it was they who wrested from the wild heathens all the backlands we now possess...So Your Majesty should make use of the Paulistas to conquer your lands" (quoted in Capistrano de Abreu 1997, 100-101).*

The letter urges the King to forget the violence committed by the *bandeirantes* and focus on the territorial claims they were making. The reframing of the *bandeirantes* as heroic men conquering land for the Portuguese crown in need of compensation was now embedded in Brazilian history. Much akin to the first Thanksgiving between the Pilgrims and Native Americans in early seventeenth century New England, the false narrative of heroic men has become an important myth of the greatness of early Brazil. This letter also situated the interior of Brazil as a wild, untamable place, yet important for domination.

Although these violent pathfinders were responsible for murdering and enslaving indigenous people while decimating native settlements, there is no denying that they expanded the Portuguese and then Brazilian territory in South America. As stated before, the majority of early Portuguese Colonization remained on the coast because of the natural barriers of mountains, jungle, and the native defenses, but these *bandeirantes* did move (although violently) into these lands to claim more territory for Portugal than was stipulated by the Papal Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) (Cardozo 1946). Brazil would not be as continentally large today if the *bandeirantes* had not made their violent incursions.

Ouro Preto (Black Gold, named because of the black iron oxide covering the gold found in the area) became the center for mineral extraction in colonial Brazil. Founded in 1711, in the inland area that would become the state of Minas Gerais (General Mines), the town flourished through the Brazilian Gold Rush of the eighteenth century. Earlier, the path to this area was found by Fernão Dias Pais, a *bandeirante* from São Paulo. Although Pais did not settle the area, Ouro Preto would not have come to be without his *bandeira*. Very little other settlement of the interior occurred during this time period.

This discovery of gold in late 17th century led Portuguese Crown to mobilize into the interior to stake claim, but also stem the lawlessness of the *bandeirantes* and to make the area produc-

tive. Directly working for the Crown, José Silva Pais, a recent graduate of the newly created engineering school in Rio de Janeiro, would go on to plan inland settlements starting in 1737. The goals of this internal colonization were to solidify Portuguese claim against the Spanish in this region as well as diversify the economy with ranching. These new settlements had the explicit intention was to "Lusify" the land, civilize the indigenous people, and raise the importance of the single family: "Lands were always apportioned on the basis of the family as an economic element, and a concerted effort was made to reinforce the idea of individual family solidarity as opposed to communal structure." as the foundation of this new society (Delson 1979, 308).

The manner in which this 18th century colonization occurred runs against the common refrain that the Portuguese were haphazard and uncoordinated in settling land. Because the *bandeirantes* had already made incursions into the interior, the new settlements could use the network of roads and any abandoned structures to populate the area. Specifically to Minas Gerais, they implemented a "convenient urbanism" (Bastos 2012). Building upon the remnants of pre-existing settlements, the colonizers would implement a three-pronged approach to set up new settlements. First, they would adapt pre-existing buildings as well as roads, ensuring structural integrity and practical road layout. Second, they would augment through the construction of new streets, publics spaces, and buildings. Lastly, they would conserve those dignified buildings through maintenance of important structures.

The interior colonization intensified after the treaty of Madrid (1750), which expanded Portuguese claim against the Spanish in South America. The Amazon region was a new region that was important to the Portuguese, while Northern Africa was becoming untenable to hold onto their colonies. Because of repeated attacks from the Moors, in 1768, the Portuguese decided to move the settlement of Mazagão from North Africa to the Amazon region in Brazil (Correia 2013). The two-thousand residents first went to Lisbon, but then arrived in Brazil creating the settlement of Nova Mazagão. Following the Philipine Ordinances, the new city would be a center for agriculture, while the residents would be adept at farming, they also were used to defending their territory, which they would need to do against the indigenous populations in Brazil (Assunção 2009). Through this colonization and other expeditions, the Portuguese were able to dominate nature through many expeditions to survey the land settle boundary disputes.

CONCLUSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

There are explanations for why Donatary Captaincies were the royal policy for a brief fourteen years in the long, more than three centuries of colonization in Brazil. With only two that were financially successful, Pernambuco and São Vicente, and with the addition of another two, Ilhéus and Porto Seguro, lasting after the creation of the Governorate General in 1549, the overwhelming failure of this system of colonization can be explained by four major reasons. First, the entire idea of implanting Donatary Captaincies was reactionary. Competing foreign powers were entering Portugal's claim in the Americas to extract the valuable brazilwood, and

Portugal reacted quickly to exert control using an existing system: Donatary Captaincies. This system had been successful in distributing land after the expulsion of the Moors during the Reconquista in continental Portugal as well as the early colonies on the Atlantic Islands of the Azores, Madeira, and Cape Verde. The amount of land in Brazil was on such a larger order of magnitude that the antiquated system could not function in this new area (de Carvalho 2015). Captains did grant *sesmarias* (subdivided tracts of land) to colonists to cultivate, but the large tracts were unmanageable at the scale intended (Martins 1980). The relatively quick decision to use Donatary Captaincies in Brazil because the system had worked in smaller colonies was not appropriate for Brazil. Second, while the Crown was able to pass on the initial capital costs of colonization onto the private individual (captain), these upfront costs were so high, on many occasions, there was no funds to actually run the captaincy once established. Third, the system did not have residency requirement for the Captain, allowing lieutenants and lower colonists to fend for themselves in Brazil without centralized decision making for each captaincy, nor were there enough colonists in general coming from the small country of Portugal to populate the new colony (Roper and van Ruymbeke 2007). Finally, the constant threat and attacks from indigenous populations thwarted many captaincies from establishing a permanent settlement. Therefore, the Crown, seeing those floundering captaincies abandoned the system in Brazil for a more formal, direct rule of Brazil with the Governorate General, much more akin to the Spanish system of colonial governance.

Even with their fleeting, formal existence, Donatary Captaincies have palpable legacies in Brazil today. To this day, interior colonization has been difficult for Brazil since these original settlements have kept the population close to the coast. Half of the twenty-six current Brazilian states derive their names from the original Donatary Captaincies. A less obvious legacy is the economic reality of contemporary Brazil which is very tied to land ownership where one percent of the population owns nearly half of all the land in the country (Garcia-Navarro 2015). The original captaincies and the *semarias* subdivisions were enormous in size and many of the same families are still owners of large tracts of land because of layers and layers of laws that have not changed since colonization.

To build upon this understanding of secondary source research of early settlements in Portuguese America, this summer, I will scrutinize primary documents as the next step. The *Ordenações do Reino* (under Dom Manuel I and Dom Filipe I) and *Códigos de Posturas Municipais* may provide a better understanding of how the Portuguese wanted to build their settlements and early cities. A closer examination of these documents as well as royal decrees, edicts, and correspondences among the metropole and colonies may help explain more about the intentions of the Portuguese for city building which have had lasting effects on contemporary Brazilian society. I also hope to illuminate more about the early planning processes of Portuguese colonization to examine the commonly held idea in the literature that the Portuguese colonial settlement was haphazard and unplanned.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank UCLA for their summer research grant that supported this work as well as Professor Vinit Mukhija for advising the project.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTOR(S)

Thomas E. Bassett is currently a PhD Student in the Department of Urban Planning at the University of California, Los Angeles, having been a practicing planner he has come back to academia to explore historical antecedents of contemporary urban issues.

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