

Challenging the Law: mistreatment of slaves in nineteenth-century Luanda.

This paper aims to analyze the mistreatment of slaves in Luanda in the second half of the nineteenth century, as described in the *Boletim Oficial de Angola* and its consequences for both victims and victimizers. Punishment of slaves was common, sometimes in public and sometimes in private. In many cases, violence against slaves was not made public but remained the hidden knowledge confined to the households of slave owners. Nonetheless, the press reported numerous instances of maltreatment of slaves, despite the efforts of slave owners to hide or trivialize such actions. The reports of slaves who received cruel punishment by their owners abound throughout the *Boletim Oficial de Angola*. Through its pages, it is possible to hear the voices of maltreated slaves as reflecting the day-to-day life of this port city. The data provide evidence that colonial law was not sufficient to control the conduct of slave owners, irrespective of gender, who continued to victimize their human property beyond what was legally sanctioned.

Biographical Statement

I am presently a second year PhD Candidate in History at York University, where I have been working under the guidance of Professor José C. Curto. My PhD dissertation will attempt to understand the importance of female entrepreneurs known as *Donas* or ladies in the socio-economic life of nineteenth century Luanda, Angola. I obtained a B.A. in History in 2004 and a M.A. in Sociology in 2008 at Universidade Federal de Sergipe, Brazil.

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