Manumission Papers, Bahia, 1831-1840

Peer-Reviewed Dataset Article

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Description

This dataset documents the manumissions of 5,133 enslaved African and Brazilian-born persons that were recorded in *Livros de Notas* (LNs) written in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, between

1831 and 1840. The volumes are deposited in the public archives of the state of Bahia (*Arquivo Púbico do Estado da Bahia*, or APEB) in Salvador.[1] The *Livros de Notas* were created by officials called *tabeliães* (notaries) who copied legal documents of different kinds into large bound volumes they maintained for the preservation and safekeeping of important records.[2]

Notaries' *livros*, or books, did not begin and end with the calendar year, but rather when the pages of one volume were filled and those of another needed to be commenced. For this reason, the thirty-nine volumes of LNs covering the years 1831 through 1840, numbered 233 through 271 in the archive, contain some *cartas de alforria*, or manumission papers, recorded in the late 1820s and others recorded in the early 1840s. These manumissions have been incorporated into our dataset even though they were not granted during the 1830s. In addition, a time lag often occurred between the writing and recording of manumission papers. Delays occurred for many reasons, not the least of which were that registration required paying fees and interacting with public officials. More than 300 of the manumissions in our dataset were granted prior to 1825. Furthermore, a minority of manumission papers that were written in the 1830s but not recorded by a notary until later do not appear in this dataset. The temporal boundaries of the dataset are thus porous, although the vast majority of the freedom events it documents occurred between 1831 and 1840.

Manumission was by no means a right in Brazil in the middle of the nineteenth century. By custom, however, owners often granted freedom to men, women, and children whom they owned. João José Reis, following a number of other historians, has argued that Brazil may have been the slave society in the Americas with the highest level of manumission. At the same time, enslaved people usually needed carefully to cultivate a relationship of trust and dependency with an owner before manumission would be considered, as did ex-slaves when freeing an enslaved child, spouse, or other loved one. Until 1871, owners had the last word and could revoke manumission.[3]

When owners granted freedom to those they held in bondage, written documents were usually drawn up to record the enslaved person's important change in legal status. It was these precious manumission papers, also called *cartas de liberdade* (freedom papers), that notaries copied into their books. The documents varied in content, but they normally contained information about the name of the person or persons being freed, the name of the owner or owners granting the manumission, the date when the event occurred, the date when the *carta*

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[1] https://dibrarq.arquivonacional.gov.br/index.php/arquivo-publico-do-estado-da-bahia.

[2] Stuart B. Schwartz, "The Manumission of Slaves in Colonial Brazil: Bahia, 1684-1745," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 54, no. 4 (1974): 604-06; Kátia M. de Queirós Mattoso, "A carta de alforria como fonte complementar para o estudo da rentabilidade da mão-de-obra escrava urbana (1819-1888)," in *A moderna história econômica*, ed. Carlos Manuel Peláez and Mircea Buescu (Rio de Janeiro: Apec, 1976), 150; Kathryn Burns, "Notaries, Truth, and Consequences," *American Historical Review* 110, no. 2 (2005): 350-79. The alphabetical index of *cartas de alforria* in APEB to which Mattoso refers was incomplete and poorly organized when Mann worked in the archive in 2012.

[3] João José Reis, "Slavery in Nineteenth-Century Brazil," in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery, Volume 4, AD 1804-AD 2016,* ed. David Eltis, Stanley L. Engerman, Seymour Drescher, and David Richardson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 143-146; Herbert S. Klein and Francisco Vidal Luna, *Slavery in Brazil* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 253-66; Robert W. Slenes, "Brazil," in *The Oxford Handbook of Slavery in the Americas*, ed. Robert L Paquette and Mark M. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 111-33.

was recorded by the notary, and, if money was paid in exchange for manumission, its amount. No monetary payment was recorded in about two thirds of the cases in this dataset. In a number of instances, however, the enslaved person or her or his mother, godparent, or other supporter gave the owner another slave in exchange for manumission.[4] Owners commonly imposed conditions of different kinds when they granted freedom, such as continued service for a period of time (most commonly until the death of the owner), payment of additional money, the saying of masses for the soul of the former owner, or even marriage in rare cases. These conditions are spelled out in manumission papers.[5]

In addition, manumission papers usually contained data about the identity of the enslaved person, such as *nação* (ascribed region of origin in Africa) or origin more generally (African- or Brazilian-born). Some *nações* such as Mina, Angola, and Benguela included people of multiple ethnolinguistic groups from within the same region of Africa. Others such as Nagô, Gege, and Congo were more specific.[6] Color, often a marker of race or racial mixing, was also sometimes ascribed, whether black (*preta/o*), brown (*parda/o*), mulatto, or occasionally mestizo. The sex of the enslaved is rarely stated explicitly, but it can be inferred from the name and the gender of the nouns and pronouns used in the document to refer to her or him, as can that of the owner or owners. More rarely, information about the age or occupation of the enslaved can be found. In some instances, the papers contain data about the relationship of the enslaved to other people, such as a mother, father, godparent, or sibling. Furthermore, they sometimes yield insights into the relationship between the owner or owners and the enslaved. Our dataset incorporates these additional categories of information, as the methodology section below will explain.

The dataset published here forms part of a larger project that is incorporating information about manumissions documented in APEB's *Livros de Notas* during the first half of the nineteenth century. We begin by publishing this section on the 1830s for both practical and substantive reasons. Our work on the earlier period is not yet complete. That on the 1840s is virtually finished, but the decade may be of less interest to researchers than the critical period of the 1835 Malê uprising. The 1830s, moreover, marked the beginning of a time when the practice of manumission increased in Bahia.[7]

The larger dataset of which this published subset forms a part was born of an effort to reconstruct the lives of individual Africans who were enslaved in the Yoruba-speaking region of West Africa during the nineteenth century and forcibly transported to Bahia. Other researchers have used information in the dataset toward similar ends, including for Africans from other parts of Africa.[8] Although many freed Africans remained poor and most remained vulnerable

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[4] For an analysis of this practice see João José Reis, "'Por sua liberdade me oferece uma escrava': alforrias por substituição na Bahia, 1800-1850," *Afro-Ásia* no. 63 (2021): 232-290. See also Lucilene Reginaldo, "André do Couto Godinho," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*, 26 May 2021, 3, 5, https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.013.962.

[5] On conditional manumission see Sidney Chalhoub, "The Politics of Ambiguity: Conditional Manumission, Labor Contracts, and Slave Emancipation in Brazil (1850s-1888)," *International Review of Social History* 60, no. (2015): 161-91, and the texts he cites in n23, 169.

[6] João José Reis, *Ganhadores: a greve negra de 1857 na Bahia* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2019), 39, 69-70.

[7] Mattoso, "A carta de alforria como fonte," 152; Reis, "Por sua liberdade," 241.

[8] Kristin Mann, "The Illegal Slave Trade and One Yoruba Man's Transatlantic Passages from Slavery to Freedom," in *The Rise and Demise of Slavery and the Slave Trade in the Atlantic World*, ed. Philip Misevich

and discriminated against, manumission was nonetheless an important moment in the lives of the majority of those who were fortunate enough to achieve it. The event marked a significant change in their ability to work for themselves and benefit from the fruits of their labor. It weakened owners' control beyond the workplace over even urban slaves who had not lived in their households. For enslaved women, manumission meant that henceforth children born to them would be free and not subject to the near absolute authority of an owner. Once freed, creoles enjoyed, in theory at least, the same civil rights as free Brazilians of any color. In sum, manumission papers are critical sources in the study of the lives of individual enslaved people because they illuminate the timing and circumstances of a significant change in their legal status and lived experiences.[9] For most, manumission represented a great accomplishment, the result of years of struggle, sacrifice, saving, and aspiration. The price of self-manumission, for example, was often as much or more than that of a newly imported African of comparable age and gender and equivalent to what it would take most enslaved men and women years to accumulate.[10]

Manumission papers are important in research on individual enslaved and freed men, women, and children for another reason. The information contained in them often opens other significant avenues of inquiry into the histories of such people. Many of the *cartas* from the 1830s identify someone other than the owner who was important in the life of the enslaved—a mother, father, godparent, sibling, child, witness, or legal representative. This evidence can facilitate reconstruction of the enslaved and then freed individual's family, religious, economic, and other networks. Each name provides a vital clue that can be followed in the quest for information about persons who have too often been lost to history. One fragment of information

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and Kristin Mann (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2016), 220-46; Kristin Mann and Lisa Earl Castillo, "Biography, History, and Diaspora: The Bight of Benin and Bahia," in Paul E. Lovejoy and Mamadou Diouf, eds., *UNESCO General History of Africa*, Vol. IX, Book 2, Section III (forthcoming); Lisa Earl Castillo, "Bamboxê Obitikô and the Nineteenth-Century Expansion of Orisha Worship in Brazil." *Tempo* 22, no. 39 (2016): 126-53; and Luis Nicolau Parés, "O Sítio Dagomé: um candomblé rural no século XIX (Salvador, Bahia)," *Afro-Ásia* no. 66 (2022): 116-164, and *Joaquim de Almeida. A história do africano traficado que se tornou traficante de Africanos* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2023).

[9] Reis, "Slavery," 144-5. See also Pierre Verger, *Os libertos: sete caminhos na liberdade de escravos no século XIX* (São Paulo: Corrupio, 1992); Zepher L. Frank, *Dutra's World: Wealth and Family in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2004), 47, 51, 116-18, 121; João José Reis, *Divining Slavery and Freedom: The Story of Domingos Sodré, an African Priest in Nineteenth-century Brazil*, trans. H. Sabrina Gledhill (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 64-74, and "De escravo a rico liberto: a trajetória do Africano Manoel Joaquim Ricardo na Bahia Oitocentista," *rev. hist. (São Paulo)* 174 (2016): 15-68; Juliana Barreto Farias, *Mercados Minas: Africanos ocidentais na praça do Mercado do Rio de Janeiro (1830-1890)* (Rio de Janeiro: Prefeitura do Rio/Casa Civil/Arquivo Geral da Cidade do Rio, 2015), ch. 3.

[10] Kátia M. de Queirós Mattoso, Herbert S. Klein, and Stanley L. Engerman, "Trends and Patterns in the Prices of Manumitted Slaves: Bahia, 1819-1888," *Slavery and Abolition* 7, no. 1 (1986):59-67; Maria Inês Côrtes de Oliveira, *O liberto: o seu mundo e os outros: Salvador, 1790-1890* (São Paulo: Corrupio, 1988), ch. 1; Mieko Nishida, "Manumission and Ethnicity in Urban Slavery: Salvador, Brazil, 1808-1888," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 73, no. 3 (1993): 307-08, 382-3; Richard Graham, *Feeding the City: From Street Market to Liberal Reform in Salvador, Brazil, 1780-1860* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), Table A.1; Klein and Luna, *Slavery in Brazil*, 139-41; Frank, *Dutra's World*, 68-9.

carefully investigated sometimes leads with growing momentum to others until a narrative begins to emerge.[11]

The identification of owners in *cartas de alforria* usually also facilitates the recovery of information about the people being manumitted. Owners, who were in some cases freed people, are almost always more visible in the historical record than the men, women, and children they owned. Through a bit of research on the owner, it is often possible to determine the parish or parishes where he or she lived. Although enslaved people did not always reside in the same parish as their owners, they frequently did so. Thus, discovery of the owner's parish provides a lead that can streamline the otherwise laborious search for an enslaved person in ecclesiastical records of baptism, marriage, and death. Work in parish records can uncover dates of baptism, marriage, and sometimes death not only of enslaved and then freed men and women themselves, but also of their children, godchildren, and even grandchildren. It greatly facilitates the reconstruction of family relationships and godparenting networks. The latter were critically important in Brazil among free, freed, and enslaved people alike.[12]

By researching the owner, moreover, it is often also possible to discover something about the labor an enslaved person performed. The dictates of enslaved peoples' work -- whether on city streets, food farms, sailing ships, or sugar *engenhos* -- impinged powerfully on their lives, shaping their daily struggles for survival and longer-term opportunities. In the course of their work, enslaved men and women forged bonds with others that intersected their family, religious, and other social networks.[13]

In addition, research on an owner can illuminate his or her character and temperament, yielding insights into the kind of treatment the enslaved individual had to endure, as well as into the spaces he or she found and widened for negotiation and resistance. Knowing the identity of a final owner, moreover, can help trace prior sale, ownership, and physical transfer, deepening the recovery of biographical information as the research expands.

When completed, our dataset of manumissions will be one of the largest and most comprehensive of any for Brazil, containing information about many thousands of men, women, and children freed in the province of Bahia between 1801 and 1850. Although the dataset was not conceived for this purpose, even the subset published here shows that it will be a rich

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[11] For the importance of manumission papers in masterful reconstructions of the lives of several enslaved and freed Africans see Reis, *Divining Slavery*, 64-74 and ch. 5; Lisa Earl Castillo and Luis Nicolau Parés, "Marcelina da Silva: A Nineteenth-century Candomblé Priestess in Bahia (Brazil)," *Slavery and Abolition* 31, 1 (2010): 1-32; Luis Nicolau Parés, "Milicianos, barbeiros e traficantes numa irmandade católica de africanos minas e jejes (Bahia, 1770-1830)," *Tempo* 20 (2014): 1-27; Lisa Earl Castillo, "O terreiro do Gantois: redes sociais e etnografia histórica no século XIX," *rev. hist. (São Paulo)* 176 (2017): 1-57; and João José Reis, Flávio dos Santos Gomes, and Marcus J. M. de Carvalho, *The Story of Rufino: Slavery, Freedom, and Islam in the Black Atlantic,* trans. H. Sabrina Gledhill (New York: Oxford University Press, 2020).

[12] Klein and Luna, *Slavery*, 239-41.

[13] Stuart B. Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants, and Rebels: Reconsidering Brazilian Slavery* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1996); B. J. Barickman, *A Bahian Counterpoint: Sugar, Tobacco, Cassava, and Slavery in the Recôncavo, 1780-1860* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998); Reis, *Ganhadores*, chs. 1-6; and Mary E. Hicks, *Captive Cosmopolitans: Black Mariners and the World of South Atlantic Slavery, 1721-1835* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, forthcoming).

source of aggregated as well as micro-historical data about manumission. The variables in the dataset permit analysis of the roles of gender; origin, *nação,* and color; and to a lesser extent age and occupation in manumission. They open investigation into the ways these categories co-varied with type, price, and conditions of manumission. The data can be used, moreover, to probe the relationship between the gender of owners and patterns and processes of manumission.[14]

The larger dataset will also be valuable for the study of slave owning in nineteenth-century Bahia. Hundreds of owners are identified in this subset on the 1830s alone. The exact number cannot be determined because some names, especially those of female owners, were common, and information internal to the documents does not always make it possible to know if those who bore them were indeed the same person. Owners who appear range from the likes of Ana Josepha do Bomfim Oliveira who, as executor of the estate of her late husband the slave trader Joaquim José de Oliveira, freed twenty-one enslaved women on the same day in 1831 to Januaria de Argolo, a Jeje freed woman, whose name appears but twice when she manumitted Brazilian-born females. Thus, the dataset supports analysis of large- to small-scale ownership of enslaved people. The owners engaged, moreover, in different kinds of economic activities. Some owned sugar plantations or food farms. Many owned enslaved men and women whom they hired out or allowed to work independently in Salvador's urban economy. Of relevance to Mann's research, the names of slave traders and slave ship captains such as Manoel Joaquim de Almeida and André Pinto da Silveira appear freeing Africans who had worked alongside them in the commerce, whether as mariners, barbers, or in other capacities.[15] Furthermore, the dataset confirms Reis's finding that the enslaved sometimes self-manumitted by exchanging another enslaved person, usually one newly arrived from Africa, for their own freedom. Thus, the dataset can be used to further the study of slave owning among the enslaved.

Dates of Data Collection

2012-2021

Dataset Languages

Portuguese, English

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[14] The important early datasets of Kátia Mattoso and Stuart Schwartz, constructed at the dawn of history's digital age when electronic resources were not what they are today, required selection and sampling. Nishida's later study of manumission in urban Salvador drew on 3,516 freedom papers from two years in each decade between 1810 and 1880, supplemented by data in wills and records of slave sales and purchases from a Salvador parish. Kátia Lorena Novais Almeida's investigation of rural Rio da Contas in the first half of the nineteenth century (N=1,552) complements that of Nishida. To contextualize his in-depth analysis of manumission by substitution, Reis has recently counted about 17,000 manumissions in Bahia between 1800 and 1850, using our database for those after 1831. Kátia M. de Queirós Mattoso, "A propósito de cartas de alforria: Bahia, 1779-1850," *Anais de História* 4 (1972): 23-52; Schwartz, "The Manumission of Slaves," 603-35; Nishida, "Manumission and Ethnicity," 361-91; Kátia Lorena Almeida, *Alforrias em Rio de Contas – Bahia, século XIX* (Salvador: EDUFB, 2012) and *Escravos e libertos nas Minas do Rio de Contas* (Salvador: EDUFBA, 2018); Reis, "Por sua liberdade." Reis (235) and Nishida (363n6) cite other relevant literature on manumission in Bahia and Brazil.

[15] For this theme see also Luis Nicolau Parés, "Entre Bahia e a Costa da Mina, libertos africanos no tráfico illegal," in *Salvador da Bahia: interações entre América e Africa (séculos XVI-XIX)*, ed. Giuseppina Raggi, João de Figueirôa-Rego, and Roberta Stumpf (Salvador: EDUFBA-CHAM, 2017), 13-50.

Geographic Coverage

Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

Temporal Coverage

1831-1840

Document Types

Freedom Certificate

Sources

Livros de Notas 233-271, Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia

Methodology

The manumission papers incorporated into this dataset were collected by manually turning and carefully examining the pages of *Livros de Notas* (LN) 233 through 271 in the Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia (APEB). A manual approach was necessary because many of the volumes do not have indexes, and most of them contain several different kinds of documents. *Cartas de alforria* are interspersed among bills of sale, power of attorney letters, marriage, dowry, and labor contracts, and other types of legal instruments. SICRO, APEB's former electronic search engine, now available online in a PDF version, did not include information about manumission papers prior to 1851 and LN 301.[16] Thus, the only way to locate those from the first half of the nineteenth century was to examine relevant volumes of LNs page by page.

Until 2014, about a quarter of the roughly 140 LN in APEB covering the years 1801-1850 were classified as *"fora de uso,"* meaning that they could not be used by researchers because of their fragile condition. Between February, 2015, and May, 2017, APEB (through the Fundação Pedro Calmon of the Secretaria de Cultura do Estado da Bahia) and the Universidade Federal da Bahia cooperated to make digital copies of the notary books in APEB covering the years 1664 to 1910, the period of slavery and the first two decades after abolition in 1888. A grant from the British Library Endangered Archives Project supported the initiative. These copies are now available on the British Library Endangered Archives website.[17] Following the digitization, many volumes of LNs formerly classified as *fora da uso* became available to us. Urano Andrade has incorporated information from *cartas de alforria* in the volumes for the 1830s into this dataset. Thanks to the digitization, a copy of each manumission paper referenced in the dataset can be accessed online.

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[16] https://sway.office.com/OHGTZsbTD5dzaTc0?ref=Link&loc=play. See also https://uranohistoria.blogspot.com/2020/09/relacao-de-fontes-disponiveis-no.html.

[17] "Digitising Endangered Manuscript Sources: The Notary Books of Bahia, Brazil, 1664-1889," https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP703. João José Reis, an UFBA professor, was the grant holder and overall coordinator of the project. Urano Andrade was its co-creator, technical coordinator, and main digital operator.

Initially, we entered into our dataset the APEB LN identification number; the page in the volume where the document appears; the name of the owner or owners manumitting the enslaved individual; the sex of the owner or owners; the name of the enslaved person or in rare cases persons being freed; the sex of the enslaved person; the nation (*nação*)/origin (*origem*) /color (*cor*) of the enslaved person; the date of the manumission; the date when the *carta* was registered by a notary; the price of manumission in *milreis*; when money was paid; any conditions attached to the manumission; and observations. The final observations column incorporates a range of rich qualitative information included in some of the documents.[18] Subsequently, we inserted a discrete identification number for each record. We also moved data about the age and occupation of the person being freed from the Observations column into columns of their own.

Portuguese is the language of the dataset, although column headings are in English. Entries in the dataset generally follow the language used in the source.

The information in the columns for identification number (IDNO), LN number (LNNO), and LN page number (LNPG) are self-explanatory, except to say, in the case of the third, that only the front side of LN pages are numbered. The reverse side is indicated by including the letter "v" for *verso* after the page number.

The name of the slave owner appears in column D (OWNER NAME). If an enslaved person was owned by more than one individual, the name of the second and, in rare cases, the third owner is also included in that column. Occasionally, an enslaved person was owned by a company or a religious order, which is specified in the dataset.[19]

Names, even of the same individual, were sometimes spelled differently. For example, those including the letter "s," such as Rosa or Cardoso, were commonly written with a "z." Consonants such as l, n, and t were sometimes doubled and sometimes not. Theresa might be written Tereza, or Santa Ana Santana. Similar examples abound. Moreover, double surnames were sometimes but not always connected by "e," meaning "and." We have sought to transcribe names as they appear in the record rather than to standardize their spelling, even in the case of the same individual. That said, the handwriting in some documents is difficult to decipher, and names were sometimes abbreviated. Readings of names and, indeed, other words might differ; errors may have crept in.

The sex of the owner is recorded in column E (SEX_O), with "M" for male and "F" for female. If there was more than one owner, the sex of each is included separated by a forward slash. When the owner was a company (*empressa*) we have entered the letter "E" in column E, and when a religious order the letters "OR."

Manumission papers sometimes contain information about the status or the nation, origin, or color of an owner. As we expanded the dataset to incorporate manumissions documented in

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[18] See, for example, Lisa Earl Castillo and Urano Andrade, "Famílias Africanas em tempos do tráfico Atlântico: o resgate de parentes em cinco cartas de alforria (Bahia, 1818-1830)," *Afro-Ásia* 60 (2019): 253-74.

[19] A number of owners are identified as members of religious orders. In these cases, they, not the orders, are listed as the owner.

LNs from the 1820s, we began entering such data in columns F (STAT_O, for status of owner) and G (N/O/C_O, for nation, origin, or color of owner). The identification of owners who were freed, enslaved, African, or of a specific *nação* is of particular interest to us. While preparing the portion of the dataset covering the 1830s for publication, we have incorporated data into columns F and G as we have come across it. Users are advised, however, that the data in these columns may not be complete. We welcome additions to columns F AND G via crowdsourcing, which we discuss more fully below.

The name of the enslaved person being manumitted is recorded in column H (ENSLAVED NAME), followed by the sex in column I (SEX_E). Occasionally, a single document granted two or even three manumissions, usually when a mother and her child or children were freed at the same time. In such cases, the information in columns B through E and O and P has been entered in a second and, if necessary, a third row with its own identification number. The name, sex, and other data about each person manumitted in the document has then been recorded in columns H through L of the successive rows.

All but about 3 percent of the manumission papers in this published dataset included language that identified the person being freed by nation (*nação*), origin more generally (*Africana/o, da Costa, Costa da África, Costa da Mina* as opposed to *crioula/o* and *criolinha/o* markers of Brazilian birth), or color or racial mixing (*preta/o, parda/o, pardinha/o, cabra, cabrinha, mulata/o, and mestizo).* Only rarely were these terms used in combination, but a number of them had double meanings. *Parda/o, pardinha/o, cabra, cabrinha, mulata/o, and mestizo* implied color or racial mixing. In practice they also communicated Brazilian-born. By the 1830s, *preta/o* was used as a synonym for African. *Crioula/o* and *crioulinha/o* indicated Brazilian-born, and they also connoted African parentage or an absence of racial mixing.[20] The diminutive "*-inha/o*" indicated young age. A *nação* was specified in about 45 percent of the cases in this published dataset, origin more generally in about 34 percent of the cases, and color in about 18 percent. *Crioula/o* or *crioulinha/o* was the most frequent designation, but *Nagô* (a *nação* associated with Yoruba speakers) was the second most frequent. The three types of identifiers are reported in a single column J (N/O/C_E) because a number of them are very closely interrelated. At the end of the article, is a list of the vocabulary used in the sources to identify persons being manumitted. It indicates whether a term refers to a *nação*, place of origin more generally, or a color classification. Users will see that some terms had overlapping meanings. In the case of others, the meaning is not obvious. We recognize that users will interrogate our classifications and perhaps revise some of them. The database allows for such interventions.

Some *nações* were spelled in a wide variety of ways. Hausa, for example, appears as *Auça, Aussá, Haussá, Uça,* and *Ussá.* Mundubi, another West African ascription, has even more variants. We have retained the different spellings of *nações* in the event that they constitute evidence and to help researchers recognize the many ways that some *nações* were written in the nineteenth century.[21] However, we have standardized diacritical marks within spellings.

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[20] Personal communication, João José Reis, Lisa Earl Castillo, and Luis Nicolau Parés, November 2021. Also, Mieko Nishida, *Slavery and Identity: Ethnicity, Gender, and Race in Salvador, Brazil, 1808-1888* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 25-6.

[21] As noted in our discussion of owners' names, spelling variations were common in nineteenth-century Brazil. When writing African terms in Portuguese, notaries and other scribes attempted to approximate phonetics, sometimes with considerable distortion. We are grateful to Lisa Earl Castillo for this insight.

Creole (*crioula/o*) and its derivatives were also written in many different ways. We have standardized their spellings.

Information about age of manumission appears in about 5 percentage of the cases in this dataset. Age was reported in years, months, days, and sometimes a combination of the three. When reported in years, the relevant integer has been entered into column K (AGE_E); when in months, the integer followed by the letter "m" (for *meses*); when in days, the number has been rounded to the nearest month. Sometimes age was reported in years plus months, for example "*dois anos e meio*" (two-and-a-half years) or *"com cinco anos e sete meses"* (five years and seven months). In such cases the integer for year is written followed by the letter "a" (for *anos*) and then the integer for months followed by the letter "m."

Commonly age was approximated: as a number of years or months "*mais ou menos*" (more or less) or as between two years or even two decades (*"com oito para nove anos"; "com 50 para 60 anos"*) (between eight and nine years; between 50 and 60 years). In the first case integers have been entered without qualification. In the second, the mid-point between the numbers has been entered, or as 8a6m and 55 in the examples given. Ages reported as *"menor de"* (less than) are preceded by the symbol "<", while those reported as *"maior de"* (more than) are preceded by the symbol ">". In some instances, age is reported as time since date of birth, while in others a birthdate is given. In these cases, age of manumission has been imputed. We have not included a column for age category – infant, child, adult, or older person. Users will easily be able to add one if they choose. Doing so may allow the insertion of age category data for *libertos* (freed persons) identified using the diminutive "*inha/o*" or described in the observations column as *velha/o* (old) or *jovem*, *moleque/ca*, or *moça/o* (indicating youth).[22] A tabulation of the age data currently in this dataset shows that 24 percent of the persons manumitted were under age 2, 44 percent were 2 through 13, 24 percent were 14 through 39, and 7 percent were 40 or above.

The occupation of the enslaved person being freed was reported in only about 2 percent of the cases in the dataset, and almost exclusively for males who performed skilled work. Examples of occupations that appear multiple times in column L (OCCUPATION_E) include mason (*pedreiro*), carpenter (*carpina/carpinteiro*), shoemaker (*sapateiro)*, barber (*barbeiro*), and tailor (*alfaiate*). Sedan chair carrier (*carregador de cadeira*) is the only semi-skilled occupation that regularly appears, perhaps because of the personal nature of the work.[23] The occupations of enslaved women were reported much less often than those of enslaved men.

Column O (DATEMAN) contains information about the date when the *carta* was written, while column P (DATEREG) gives the date when the document was registered by the notary. With the

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[22] For information about ages associated with such terms in nineteenth-century Bahia, see João José Reis, "População e rebelião: notas sobre a população escrava na Bahia na primeira metade do século XIX," *Revista das Ciências Humanas* 1 ,no. 1 (1980): 149.

[23] On the significance of these occupations among enslaved men see Maria José de Souza Andrade, *A mão-de-obra escrava em Salvador, 1811-1860* (São Paulo: Corrupio, 1988), 127-49; Lysie Reis, *A liberdade que veio do ofício: práticas sociais e cultura dos artífices da Bahia do século XIX* (Salvador: EDUFBA, 2012); Maria de Carvalho Soares, "African Barbeiros in Brazilian Slave Ports," in *The Black Urban Atlantic in the Age of the Slave Trade*, ed. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Matt D. Childs, and James Sidbury (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2013), 207-30; Parés, "Milicianos, barbeiros," 14-21; Castillo, "O terreiro do Gantois," 19-33; Hicks, *Captive Cosmopolitans*, ch. 6; and Reis, *Ganhadores*, 41-58, 88-91, 99, 105-13, passim.

exception of a handful of cases when only the year of manumission was recorded, both dates follow the form four digits for the year, two for the month, and two for the day. Very rarely the date of registration precedes the date when the *carta* was written, whether because the scribe who transcribed the document made a mistake or for some other reason.

When money was specified as paid for manumission, the amount has been entered in *milreis* in column Q (PRICE_MR). Prices ranged from $8.000 (eight milreis) for a young male creole in the early 1830s to $1,200.000 (one conto, two hundred milreis) for a pardo male in 1840. The mean price was $294.000, and median price $300.000**.**

Conditions that limited a manumission have been entered in column R (CONDITIONS), where we have at this stage generally adhered to the language in the document rather than standardizing categories of limitation. The contents of column S (OBSERVATIONS) have been discussed above.

Our larger dataset and, to a degree, this published subset of it are works in progress. As mentioned when discussing the status and the nation, origin, and color of the owners, data about these variables have yet to be entered systematically. Evidence about mothers, fathers, children, siblings, godfathers, godmothers, and others significant in the lives of those being manumitted, who are sometimes named in *cartas*, is at this stage reported in column S. Of these categories of people mothers were named most commonly, in a quarter of the cases we estimate. Beyond their names, mothers were sometimes also identified by their status (enslaved or freed) and nation, origin, or color. As a first step toward the analysis of such data, we have incorporated a column M (MOTHER_E) for the names of mothers and another N (FATHER_E) for those of fathers.

Users of this dataset who consult our original sources via the British Library Endangered Archives website, which we encourage, inevitably will discover errors. We urge users to report them to us via email. This and other aspects of the dataset create opportunities for crowdsourcing. Although the published dataset cannot be overwritten, it can be downloaded for individual use and manipulation. We are pleased to share this valuable resource with others, expect to expand it in future, and look forward to seeing how it will be used.[24]

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Data Links

Dataset Repository: Harvard Dataverse, https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/LIIZXU
Linked Data Representation: Enslaved.org

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