

KNOWLEDGE THAT IS ANNOUNCED: THE POWER OF THE WORD IN TIMES OF SLAVERY (RIO DE JANEIRO, 1830-1888)

O SABER QUE SE ANUNCIA:

O PODER DA PALAVRA EM TEMPOS DE ESCRAVIDÃO (RIO DE JANEIRO, 1830 A 1888)

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EL PODER DE LA PALABRA EN TIEMPOS DE ESCLAVITUD (RIO DE JANEIRO, 1830-1888)

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Abstract: The objective of this study was to indicate the existence of slaves who knew how to read and write, based on the mapping of nineteenth-century periodicals in circulation in the city of Rio de Janeiro in the period between 1830 and 1888. It also sought to analyze the meanings of the insertion of slaves in the universe of the written word, signaling the importance of understanding the different knowledge and experiences of the enslaved subjects. The study seeks to make visible the different possibilities around the knowledge of slaves, subjects in transit, holders of cultures, knowledge, and rich and varied experiences. The paper argues that education was a form of resistance and that learning to read and write indicated ways of achieving freedom.

Keywords: slaves, knowledge, adverts, reading, writing.

Resumo: O objetivo neste artigo é mostrar, com base no mapeamento de anúncios de periódicos oitocentistas em circulação na cidade do Rio de Janeiro no período compreendido entre 1830 e 1888 que existiam escravos que sabiam ler e escrever. Procura-se também analisar os significados da inserção de escravos no universo da palavra escrita, sinalizando para a importância de se compreender os diferentes saberes e experiências dos sujeitos escravizados. Dando visibilidade às diferentes possibilidades em torno do aspecto cognitivo e sociológico dos escravos, sujeitos em trânsito, detentores de culturas, conhecimentos e vivências ricas e variadas, defende-se que a educação foi uma forma de resistência e que o aprendizado da leitura e da escrita indicou aos escravos caminhos para a conquista da liberdade.

Palavras-chave: escravos, saberes, anúncios, leitura, escrita.

Resumen: El objetivo del trabajo es analizar la existencia de esclavos que sabían leer y escribir, a partir del mapeo de anuncios de periódicos ochocentista en circulación en la ciudad de Rio de Janeiro en el periodo entre 1830 y 1888. También se pretende analizar los significados de la inserción de esclavos en el universo de la palabra escrita, señalando la importancia de comprender los diferentes saberes y experiencias de los sujetos esclavizados. El trabajo tiene como objetivo poner de relieve las diferentes posibilidades respecto al aspecto cognitivo y sociológico de los esclavos, sujetos en tránsito, poseedores de culturas, conocimientos y experiencias ricas y variadas. El artículo sostiene que la educación es una forma de resistencia y el aprendizaje de la lectura y escritura indicó caminos para la conquista de la libertad.

Palabras clave: esclavos, saberes, anuncios, lectura, escritura.

INTRODUCTION

1:000\$000 Reward to any person who seize and take to Castello Farm, in S. José d'além Paraíba, State of Minas Gerais, the slave named Adão, who has been on the run since April 2nd, 1877, and has the following characteristics: tall height, thin, black, with loose hair, a little beard, a little hunchback, thin face, has a fissure on the right side of his chest, speaks well, knows how to read and write, has an ankle quite thick and works as a carpenter: he was enrolled in the receipt office of Rio-Pardo, province of Rio Grande do Sul (Jornal do Commercio, 1882a, p. 5).

The above announcement aimed to capture Adão, who had been on the run from the Castello Farm in Minas Gerais for five years. Besides the long search time, the value offered in reward for Adam is worth mentioning: a conto de réis (1,000\$000). Why was Adão so worthy? Holder of the carpenter profession and from the province of Rio Grande do Sul, he could read and write. Was this his differential and the reason for reward so high? What are the skills of the slaves?

In this text, it is intended, first, based on the mapping of advertisements in nineteenth-century periodicals circulating in the city of Rio de Janeiro, imperial court, in the period between 1830 and 1888, to indicate the existence of slaves who knew how to read and write. It is also intended to analyze the meanings of the insertion of slaves in the universe of the written word, signaling to the importance of understanding the different knowledge and experiences of the enslaved subjects.

In the context of the historiography of education, advertisements in periodicals have been used as sources for thinking about the problem of education in its broadest sense. Vasconcelos (2005), for example, has done a thorough analysis of announcements of private teachers and preceptors in her important study on domestic education in Imperial Brazil. The ads were also chosen by Schelbauer (2007), who analyzed the records of the teaching method in the newspaper *A província de São Paulo*. In order to think about the flourishing of the publishing market of History of Brazil books, Silva (2008) explored newspaper and magazine ads in the city of Rio de Janeiro, between 1870 and 1924. In turn, Limeira (2010) analyzed the announcements of Almanak Laemmert to study the expansion of private schools in the nineteenth century.

The option of finding the traces for dealing with slavery-related topics in periodical ads is not new either: many researchers have used them. Among them, we highlight Gilberto Freyre (2012), especially in the book *Os escravos nos anúncios de jornais brasileiros do século XIX*, first published in 1961. Freyre's concern was to study some physical and personality characteristics of slaves in Imperial Brazil. In the introduction to the first edition of the book, "[...] the advertisement seeks to 'attract, trap, absorb' the attention of the reader, in a very special way: with practical and immediate goals, through words capable of conquering the reader to the advertiser or to the advertised object" (Freyre, 2012, p. 34, author's emphasis). We also highlight Schwarcz (1987) who, analyzing ads, articles and want-ads, explored the representations built on slaves in the newspapers of São Paulo. The construction of the profile of slaves based on ads in newspapers of Paraíba was the focus of the work of Dias (2013). The descriptions contained in ads of escaped slaves in the western of São Paulo between 1870 and 1876 were Ferrari's objective (2001, 2008). The lexicon of slave ads in the Recife newspapers was the concern of Bastos's studies (2007, 2016). The ads of escaped slaves were used as sources to problematize escape as a resistance of captives (Gomes, 1996; Ferrari, 2006; Ferreira, 2012; Soares, 2003). In turn, Barbosa (2009) indicates different forms of relationship between the slaves and the press: from those who circulated

in the streets selling newspapers to the slave readers of such newspapers. For this author, the newspaper ads provide evidence of the existence of literate slaves in Brazil, “[...] a page almost forgotten” (Barbosa, 2009, p. 1). In the book *Escravos e o mundo da comunicação*, Barbosa deepens her reflections on the practices of orality, reading and writing developed by the slaves (Barbosa, 2016).

There are important specific studies on the uses of writing by slaves. Analyzing a letter from free slave Florença da Silva to her daughter (the slave named Balbina), Graham (2007) problematizes the uses and insertion of slaves and freedmen in the universe of written culture. The multiple meanings of writing between slaves and freedman is the focus of Wissenbach (2002), who analyzes letters and letters of attorney produced by slaves in São Paulo in the second half of the nineteenth century. The problematization of the process of acquisition of reading and writing and the appropriation of texts by slaves and freedmen is also the object of analysis in other important studies (Morais, 2007; Moysés, 1994, 1992). Analyzing wills and inventories produced in the eighteenth century, Eduardo Paiva indicates the existence of slaves who attended schools and, in these spaces, they learned to read and write (Paiva, 2006). Based on documents of the black brotherhood Sociedade Protetora dos Desvalidos, founded in 1832, in the State of Bahia, Oliveira (2006) analyzes the uses that the slaves made of writing, showing the importance that this had in their lives.

Placing the concerns of this work in the intersection of the fields of History of Education and History of Written Culture, it is considered writing and reading as objects and social practices of different spaces and temporalities. Agreeing with Castillo Gómez (2005), who believes that the study of written culture must take into account social and cultural aspects, as well as the different forms, functions and uses of writing, mechanisms, places of acquisition, networks of sociability of those who write, as well as those of the illiterate, the policies of finished writing and the act of writing, the modes of circulation and appropriation of manners, typologies and spaces of reading.

SUBJECTS IN TRANSIT: SLAVES IN NEWSPAPER ADS

If abolitionist periodicals, such as *Gazeta da Tarde*, *Cidade do Rio*, *A Gazetinha*, did not publish advertisements of escaped slaves, on the other, *A Gazeta de Notícias*, *O Jornal do Commercio*, among others, spread extensively among the masters who sought their slaves. Such announcements were paid and certainly contributed to the functioning of such journals.

The existence of announcements of different types - from those aimed at hygiene products, books, schools, teachers to advertisements for rent to work, slave to sell, wanted slave - shows the diversification of the readership of the newspaper. The capture of slaves was a paid activity for many, from the consumer of expensive goods to those seeking an occupation. In this way, the ads signaled the existence of public readers located in different social places and who read the same newspaper, albeit with different interests. The fugitive slave himself, when he could read, could make use of the announcements to know exactly how he was being represented and what he would have to do to avoid being captured. Moreover, they also indicate that there was group and oral reading (Barbosa, 2016) to learn and update on themes such as abolitionism and freedom.



Figure 1 - Slaves reading the newspaper O Paiz, by Angelo Agostini.
Source: Revista Ilustrada (1887, p. 4).

In this text, it was analyzed ads from the newspapers listed in the table below, in circulation in the imperial court and surrounding areas.

Tabela 1- Periódicos

TITLE	FOUNDED IN	OWNER	CITY	PRICE
Diário do Rio de Janeiro	1821	Zeferino Vito de Meirelles	Rio de Janeiro	40 réis per single copy
Jornal do Commercio	1827	Pierre Plancher	Rio de Janeiro	For 4 months: 4\$000
Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Político, Universal	1848	Francisco José dos Santos Rodrigues	Rio de Janeiro	For 3 months: 4\$000
Gazeta de Notícias	1875	José Ferreira de Sousa Araújo	Rio de Janeiro	1 year subscription: 1\$000
O Fluminense	1878	Francisco Rodrigues de Miranda	Niterói	For 6 months: 5\$000

The small ads, with varied functions and purposes, present vestiges of different aspects of the lives of slaves and freedmen. Mapping ads from *Jornal do Commercio* from the period of 1827 to 1829, it was found only one ad pertaining to a slave who could read, write and count. He was Elizario, who fled on May 7th, 1829: “[...] dark brown, ordinary stature, tailor profession, knows how to read, write and count, very well spoken, and calls himself a freedman” (*Jornal do Commercio*, 1829, p. 4). However, in the ads published in the period between 1830 and 1839, the number of occurrences involving slaves who could read and write was greater, as shown in Table below:

Table 2 - *Jornal do Commercio*, 1830-1839.

About 6 or 7 months ago a very dark mulatto escaped, named ‘Gaudino, the son of Sertão do Pernambuco’, with the following characteristics, full of body and ordinary stature, finished hair, and speaks the way of Sertão de Pernambuco, ‘knows how to read, write, wearing a shirt and cotton swimsuits, and along with a bundle of stolen white clothes, which he soon had to wear to be a freedman’; whoever finds out about him, warning on rua dos Pescadores, n. 87, will receive good reward (1830, p. 4, author’s emphasis).

50\$000 réis reward is given to those who capture a ‘brown man named Marcelino’, who has been on the run since September 7th of the year, with the following characteristics: thin, long face, ordinary stature, ‘he can read and write, he is very perceptive in speaking, he is an apprentice carpenter’, who know his whereabouts and capture him can go to the street behind the Hospice, n. 77, or rua Direita, n. 34, and will be rewarded (1832a, supl., author’s emphasis).

On the last day of November of this year, ‘a slave named Francisco fled from a farm of panha, he is a carpenter, a son of Pernambuco, walked with chain in his foot’, in the left hand, his right immediate finger, the large right that does not bend, and on the left foot the little finger is missing. ‘They say that he can read and write, because he had just been bought’; whoever captures and takes him to the farm of Comendador Plácido, or at Rua de São Pedro da Cidade Nova, n. 20, will receive Alviçaras (1832b, p. 4, author’s emphasis).

On the 22nd of this month, fled from the house on Rua da Quitanda, n. 169, ‘a brown man from Minas’, of very low stature, stocky, ‘very light color, can impersonate white, has black thin long hair’; he is more or less 17 years old, stole twenty coins of 6\$400 plus a few small pieces, and in silver, thirty-eight Spanish pesos, and also small metal coins and 200\$000 réis or more in banknotes; he wore two pairs of trousers, one white and one black, and his jacket; but considering he has money may have already changed suit; whoever takes him to the house mentioned above, will receive 100\$000 réis, ‘warning that he can read and write’ (1833, p. 4, author’s emphasis).

Fifty thousand reis of reward to who take to his master, in Rua Direita, n. 93, the slave named Fernando, Creole, son of Bahia, who is 26 to 28 years old, good stature and well done, ‘is a carpenter and knows how to read and write’: he disappeared on the 12nd of the current, wearing striped trousers, thin white shirt and hair hat, which we

think he will call himself as freedman and from now on, it is protested against anyone who picks him up at his house, etc. (1839a, p. 4, author's emphasis).

On December 11st, 1838, the captain Antonio José Afonso Guimarães, now resident in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Rua Direita, n. 3, announced the escape of a brown slave named José Francisco, aged 28 to 30 years old, from Pernambuco, an 'expert carpenter, who also works as a carpenter', with the following characteristics: clear, thin, little beard, ordinary stature, trimmed teeth, slow speaking, walking on shoes, he know how to read, write and count, he worked in the works of Mr. Aguiar, in Largo do Machado, in this city, and it is stated that 'he calls himself free' [...](1839a, p. 4, author's emphasis).

Through the analysis of slave announcements, it is emphasized the so-called 'characteristics' that would help identify the escaping captive: physical aspects, dress, skills, professions, personality. For the most part, the ads are small, but it was located a few more extensive ones in which there is a greater number of elements regarding the slave on the run:

Escaped from Lieutenant Coronel Antonio Maria da Silva Torres, a resident of Rua do Fogo, n. 93, on the 1st of the current, a brown named Firmino, a slave of the couples of his deceased in-laws, predecessor and woman, dressed in dark braided jeans, imitating borel, ordinary morim shirt, blue stripe jacket faded and high top black hat; and carrying his pants and a new white ruão jacket, and has the following characteristics: approximately twenty years old, ordinary stature, brown eyes, very black hair, a scar in the middle of the upper lip, like a crack; he has no upper teeth, he can read and write, he has principles of tailor and cobbler, and he is humble in appearance, but he is very lively. It is suspected that he would pretend to be a freedman and offer himself to a sailor or soldier, or that he would be seduced to flee, because he was absent even in the daytime for no known reason. It is therefore envisaged that any authority to which he presents himself the favor of capturing him, and warning the advertiser, as well as any pedestrian, may take him in any part, and take him to the same advertiser; and finally, it is protested to proceed against those who seduced or attacked him (Jornal do Commercio, 1836a, p. 3-4).

The brown Firmino knew how to read and write, he was a tailor and a cobbler, and by the way, impersonating a freedman, he intended to offer himself as a sailor or a soldier. Similarly, the brown Antonio Borges, natural of Bahia, fled the court on April 13rd, 1836. He was a tailor, "[...] when he ran away he wore brown denim trousers, a white jacket and a black hat [...]" and "[...] it was said that where he worked, in the conversations he had with people who did not know him, he called himself as freedman, who knows how to read, write and count, and from Bahia he was sold to Rio Grande, as he said to be forro [...]", being described as quite wily (Jornal do Commercio, 1836b, p. 3).

The fear of captain Antonio José Afonso Guimarães was never to recover the brown José Francisco, since this, impersonating freed, could embark on some ship offshore:

On December 11st, 1838, the captain Antonio José Afonso Guimarães, now resident in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Rua Direita, n. 3, announced the escape of a brown slave named José Francisco, aged 28 to 30 years, from Pernambuco, an expert carpenter, who also works as a joiner, with the following characteristics: light, thin, little beard, ordinary stature, trimmed teeth, 'slow speaking, walking on shoes, he was able to read, write, and count'. He worked in the works of Mr. Aguiar, in Largo do Machado, in this city, and it is evident that he called himself as freed. This brown man went from Pernambuco to Rio Grande de São Pedro, where he served his master for many years,

then came to this city, where he remained in his power for a year or so, and disappeared for the first time in the beginning of February 1838, for no reason at all; he was captured and was in the house of correction, from where later he came to the power of its master, until again he fled. Therefore, it is recommended to the captains of vessels that sail off bar, the gift of capturing him, in the case that the same, entitled himself as freedman, ask place of passage or obligation on the ship; as well as to any person from this or from other provinces, and especially those who work in the works of carpenter and joiner, taking him to the above-mentioned house, for which the reward of 50\$000 is offered if capture is made in this city or its suburbs, and 100\$000 reis, if outside (Jornal do Commercio, 1839b, p. 4, author's emphasis).

In addition to the advertisements for escaped slaves, it was also analyzed the ads for the sale of slaves, such as the following: “[...] a dark brown soldier who knows how to read, write and count is very agile for any service, especially for the office, to carry papers or dispatches, he is very healthy” (Jornal do Commercio, 1835, p. 4). In that context, where the illiteracy rates of the population were very high, the mastery of the letters allowed the accomplishment of diverse tasks. Having a slave who mastered the codes of the written culture could represent a profitable investment. Below, Table with some ads for the sale of slaves.

Table 3 - Sales ads.

‘For sale’, for bar out, a brown man who understands the pottery services and can read and write. Those interested should go to rua da Quitanda, barbershop, n. 183 (Jornal do Commercio, 1835, p. 3, author’s emphasis).

Anyone ordering the purchase of a slave to Angola, Mozambique or any other part of Africa to be entrusted with the most important domestic business can take advantage of the opportunity to buy a creole from this court, aged 21, who is a ‘tailor, knows how to read, write and count’, and who, because of his vivacity, is capable of telling and solving any task. Look for the greater official of the empire’s office, on Rua da Guarda Velha (Jornal do Commercio, 1838, p. 4, author’s emphasis).

‘For sale’, in the street nova do Livramento n. 84, a brown tailor, who cuts and does all the work, is a good pawn and field-catcher, he also understands how to repair harnesses, he is a good bleeder of mule and horse, he understands the Brazilian plantations, knows ‘how to read, write, and count’, is very fit for any farmer. He has no addictions; and the reason for the cash sale will be said (Jornal do Commercio, 1837, p. 3, author’s emphasis).

Based on the mapping of *Jornal do Commercio* ads from 1840 to 1849, it was possible to verify the same constancy in the physical descriptions and the ‘characteristics’ of profile, such as: ‘is quite clear in the service’, ‘can read, write and count’, ‘impersonate freed’, ‘tailor profession’, ‘speak well’.

From 1850, the announcements revealed the different knowledges and trajectories of the slaves. In addition to learning trades such as tailor, carpenter, cobbler, many of the slaves who could read and write could, according to the concern of the masters in the ads, make use of such a skill to falsify documents. For example: “Antonio and Legario, Creoles, escaped on February 15th, Antonio, with a tailor’s job, creole of Pernambuco native, is tall, stocky, knows how to read and write, may have a false passport, to escape to Pernambuco, his age is about 30 to 33 years old” (Jornal do Commercio, 1851, p. 4).

However, many slaves could hide their ability to read and write, since mastery of reading and writing could generate mistrust among some masters:

Fled from rua de S. Clemente, n. 23, the slave Bento, brown, son of Iguape, about 25 years old, regular stature, good teeth, short hair, very humble, speaks with ease and a little paused, walked on shoes: he took with him a striped jacket and another of blue cloth, with yellow and vivid red buttons, hat and cap of black cloth, is a tailor, and although he denies, he can read and write. It is suspected of attempting to embark on having a sailor brother currently in the court. Whoever captures him and takes to the house up, or to rua de São Pedro, n. 32, will be well rewarded (Jornal do Commercio, 1852a, p. 4).

For a slave, knowing how to sign his or her name in the passport to transit as a freedman in different provinces and cities was another meaning of literacy. In 1852, this was the case of the brown Augusto, who had fled for more than a year: “[...] who knows how to read and write, and signs with the name of Augusto Borges da Motta, with which he signed the passport from Bahia, from where he is natural [...]” and “[...] it is suspected that this brown is working with the title of freedman in some house of tailor or made clothing” (Jornal do Commercio, 1852b, p. 3). In addition to those who signed the name in documents, the ads also emphasized those who knew foreign languages, as was the case with Estanislau, “[...] of regular stature, 22 years old, quite a bearded principle, bladder signs on his face, write

Portuguese and French, and he has the profession of a finisher” (Jornal do Commercio, 1855a, p. 4).

It was also found signs of musician slaves, such as the brown Joaquim, an expert blow instrument player:

A brown slave, with the following characteristics, escaped from the Bom Sucesso Farm of the Commander José de Souza Breves, on day 8 of this: regular stature, a little less than brown, almost black-haired, always combed, about 24 years old, a little full of body, little beard on the cheeks and chin, good teeth, thick lips, long and full face, lively look, understands tailor, knows how to read and write, is a good musician and he plays almost all the wind instruments, his forte is clarinet, and when the toque makes big cheeks and swells his neck a lot, his name is Joaquim, and his nickname, Musician, he was working at the Bom Sucesso Farm, and in irons, because of a serious crime he committed, and of which he was acquitted by the jury of Pirai for lack of evidence, but that his master understood that he should correct him; must show on his buttocks scars of action and perhaps signs of the irons he carried on his legs. Anyone who apprehends him and takes him to the Pinheiro farm, or the Commander José de Souza Breves, in the parish of Arrozal, will receive the gratuity promised above (Jornal do Commercio, 1856a, p. 3).

Another example is the brown Manoel, who used the nickname Manoel Musician: “[...] regular stature, fat, edentulous, 38 years old, more or less, he is a musician, knows how to read and write, and has a sign on his back from a wolf (vulgar); calls himself as a freedman, and is considered to be a refugee by the province of São Paulo near Franca do Imperador, where he is entitled lawyer” (Jornal do Commercio, 1872, p. 8).

Among the enslaved musicians, it was also found Ernesto, “[...] brown, musician, knows how to read and write” (Gazeta de Notícias, 1878, p. 4), and the brown Felipe, “[...] with the following characteristics: quite clear, regular structure, blue eyes, short hair, badly made feet, represents being over 28 years old, tailor profession, and a musician, knows how to read and write” (Jornal do Commercio, 1864, p. 3).

Where and how did Joaquim learn to play musical instruments? It is interesting to note that the reward for anyone capturing ‘the musician’ was high, worth 300\$000. Was learning an instrument more a slave trade, or was it part of the sociability of these subjects?

In the literature, it was found representations of slave bands. The novel *Maria Dusá*, by Lindolfo Rocha, relates the cases of Sinhás that made money creating slave bands: “Yes, Sinhá. Look Sinhá Dedé, Sinhá Juliana, Sinhá Raimunda, Mucujê! This one has bought black, indeed! Already bought twenty-four. Black new, only! She said it’s to do a zabumba suit, to play at every party and earn money for her” (Rocha, 1910, p. 54).

Therefore, it is understood that music was another of the slave knowledge, that composed bands of songs from the colonial time. The existence of a band composed of slaves was mentioned by several travelers, including. In the book *Viagens ao Nordeste do Brasil*, Henry Koster (1793-1820) referred to the slaves’ band of Simplício Dias da Silva: “[...] he has a magnificent house, a band composed of his slaves, some of whom are educated in Lisbon and Rio de Janeiro” (Koster, 1942, p. 237). This quotation contains evidences as to how the musical education of slaves occurred: many attended music conservatories in Brazil and abroad to learn to play various instruments.

The existence of musician slaves was not exclusive to Brazil. Joseph Antonio Emidy (1775-1835), for example, born on the West African coast of New Guinea, sold as a slave by Portuguese traffickers, who passed through Brazil and taken with his master to Lisbon, Portugal, became an important violinist and composer in Cornwall (McGrady, 1991). Or, according to Diéguas Junior (1997), many were the travelers who described bands composed by ‘blacks’:

Another reference is found in Thomas Lindley who, in Bahia in 1802, saw a music band composed of ‘very black men’; adds that these musicians were rehearsed by barber surgeons also black who, according to the English traveler, had long been itinerant musicians. Another traveler, in 1817, saw in Rio de Janeiro an orchestra of black musicians playing joyful songs. Martius - this traveler - further stated that the prince formed a vocal and instrumental music band with indigenous and black mestizos (Diéguas Jr., 1997, p. 19, author’s emphasis).

According to the entry ‘Music Bands’, from the Dictionary of Black Slavery in Brazil, the first black slave orchestra in Brazil would be dated 1610.

The practice of forming bands with slaves was profitable for masters. It is worth mentioning the rich Bahia owner D. Raimunda Porcina de Jesus, who received payments for the participation of her band at Bonfim parties (Moura, 2004). The existence of a School of Music for slaves in the Real Farm of Santa Cruz in Rio de Janeiro was indicated in the study of Antonio Carlos dos Santos (2009).

For the author:

The Real Farm of Santa Cruz worked as a training and modeling institution for the individual (black slave), seeking to ‘soften’ his manners and specializing him as a labor force, to supply the needs of the farm and the aristocracy and merchants of the city of Rio de Janeiro. This specialization, dating from Jesuit times, made the black slaves of Santa Cruz to be requisitioned for various services, including women musicians were contracted (Santos, 2009, p.20, author’s emphasis).

Joaquim Teixeira da Silva Cotta offered 50\$000 of gratification to those who captured the brown Marcolino: “[...] he is from Pernambuco, he knows how to read and write, he has a very good way and can call himself as freedman, has a carpenter’s profession [...]”. It is striking in the case of Marcolino the description that the slave escaped with weapons: “[...] he carried a pistol, a cutting-edge knife and a spring knife, a white hare fur hat and a lot of clothes, so you can know the way he will appear dressed, just as the reason for the escape is not known” (Jornal do Commercio, 1854, p. 4).

From the period between 1850 and 1859, in Table 4, it is highlighted the ads for the sale of slaves who, besides reading and writing, could translate French, play piano, embroider, etc.

Table 4 - Sales ads, Jornal do Commercio, 1850-1859

For sale, ‘a very well-gifted brown woman’, a dressmaker who cuts dresses for women, men’s shirts, perfectly iron clothes, oven and stove cooking, makes sweets, dresses and folds a lady and has a 9-year-old son, ‘knows

how to read and write', but do not sell together, and not to house commission, to treat in rua da Conceição, shop (1855b, p. 4, author's emphasis).

'For sale', an eighteen-year-old brown man, good nursemaid, good at handling and treating animals, 'good tailor; knows how to read, write and count perfectly, and also translates French'; at Rua do Parto, n. 96 (1856b, p. 3, author's emphasis).

For sale, at Rua da Alfândega, n. 70, a perfect brown baker, a good cobbler, 'knows how to read and write', and secured conduct (1856c, p. 2, author's emphasis).

'For sale', an old black woman who washes and cooks for 450\$000, as well as a 15-year-old brown sissy, 'who knows how to read, write, play the piano, embroider', and everything expected from a full maid, with the condition of going out: at Rua da Alfândega, n. 12 (1858, p. 3, author's emphasis).

The set of announcements referring to the period from 1860 to 1869 evidences the constancy of aspects such as: change of clothes to disguise, speaking well, knowing how to read and write and the fear on the part of masters that the escaped slaves ‘claimed to be freedmen’.

One example is that of the brown Florentine, natural of Pernambuco: “[...] carpenter profession, aged 32 to 34 years, regular stature, natural color, thin, blue eyes, rare beard on chin, thick mustache, a little hunchback”. He was in the habit of changing his name (he called himself Lourenço), he could read and write, and according to the advertisement he showed false papers to impersonate freedman (Jornal do Commercio, 1861, p. 3). In turn, Francisco, who was very fond of dancing, was “[...] a cook and a butler, with the following characteristics: short, talker, he knows how to read and write, he walks on shoes” (Jornal do Commercio, 1868, p. 3).

In the period from 1870 to 1879, it is highlighted the announcements that show the concern of the masters with the escaped slaves who called themselves as freedmen. In others, the use of the ability to read and write to falsify documents appears, as in the case of Marcos: “[...] he speaks well, he can read and write, he has the habit of taking a false passport” (Jornal do Commercio, 1875, p. 5).

Another skill resulting from learning to read and write was the work in typography, a job performed by the youngest Joaquim da Silva Machado:

[...] light brown, with curly and divided hair, speaks very loudly with a sharp and fine voice, is 14 years old and represents a younger age, as a result of his poor development: he took a coat and striped Angola striped jeans, linen breast shirt, low-top silk hat and calf shoe, knows how to read and write and has principles of typographic art, which he was learning (Jornal do Commercio, 1870, p. 3).

Sociability networks were also another important element in establishing a fugitive slave. The slave Manoel, for example, “[...] claims to be the godson of a respectable proprietor [...]”, besides being “[...] very good to walk, in gestures and speech, he can read and write, but he does not say it” (Jornal do Commercio, 1874, p. 7). Concern about the support received by the escaped slave was also noticeable in the announcement concerning the slave Emiliano, “[...] machinist blacksmith, son of the slave Justa, freed for free in 1865” (Jornal do Commercio, 1878, p. 5). Still on Emiliano, it appears in the announcement: “[...] after absenting himself from the company of his master, he says he is freed, using different names in some houses. He has a sister name Leonarda, also freed for free, living in Calçada do Bonfim, where he hid himself at first” (Jornal do Commercio, 1878, p. 5).

The brown Rodolfo is described as very active and intelligent: “[...] hatmaker, but he knows how to sew on a sewing machine, having worked for some years as a steam engineer in what he is very practical: he knows how to read and write something, impersonate a freedman, used to walk in shoes and dress well” (Jornal do Commercio, 1877, p. 7).

Attributing negative characteristics to escaped slaves was another constant in the ads analyzed. In the eyes of many masters, some slaves would have the habits of lying, stealing, and getting drunk. This was the case with the announcement about Pedro, addressed to the police of the court and suburbs, with a reward of 30\$000:

Escaped, on the 27th of the past, slave Pedro, Creole, 36 years old, a Bahian, cook, regular height, thin, with a mustache, who knows how to read and write, usually gets drunk, claims to be free, being seen for days in a hotel in Engenho Novo, rented, distrusted to be captured, disappeared from the said hotel, but it is suspected that he would walk there or that he would come to the court in order to rent another house. That is why the owners of hotels and private houses are warned to not rent to escaped slaves in good faith, as if they were free. He wore several clothes of cashmere and denim, he walks on shoes, wear vest and jacket, was the slave of the widow Miranda, in Rua da Gloria, n. 64, where he has his mistress, which is said to be to be sold to a house on rua do Lavradio (Jornal do Commercio, 1881, p. 4).

Another slave described as dishonest was Adriano, belonging to Peixoto & Vieira. Among other characteristics, it is reported that he was very talkative, knows how to read and write “[...] and when he ran away, he took a subscription” given by a certain Jose Rodrigues Milagres in order to raise donations to free himself and is considered to have embarked on the 9th of the current in the Porto Novo station to the court, impersonating a cooker” (Jornal do Commercio, 1882b, p. 4).

In addition to the 500\$000 reward offer, the ad referring to the slave Francisco also emphasized that he had the ability to cheat, used to change his name and called himself Francisco Gonçalves Pinto:

[...] dark brown, short, stocky, long face, he has a mustache and a pear, he is very well dressed, he wears a watch chain and a medal, a black hat, he can read and write, he is very talkative, he is here at court because he has been seen for a long time and at the Teatro Recreio Dramático for months, accompanying a foreign harlot: it is said that this one lives on rua of Lavradio, in the block between the streets of Relação and Visconde do Rio Branco and that the said slave is there” (Jornal do Commercio, 1882c, p. 6).

Analyzing the set of announcements of *Correio Mercantil e Instructivo, Politico, Universal*, from 1848 to 1868, it is highlighted the case of the brown Raymundo, who would have the habit of changing his name, calling himself Pompeo Jose Raymundo. Among his characteristics is: “[...] he is a good tailor, cuts and does all the works until dresses of ladies, and also shoe animals, knows how to read, write a little” (Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal, 1859a, p. 3). He fled when he took a letter to Mr. Paplona, and as soon as he received the reply, he fled for no apparent reason. The advertisement of the brown Raymundo was very recurrent, having repeated many times. In turn, the pedestrians were warned of the flight of the black Firme, of whom it was suspected that he could read and write, and that “[...] he was to settle in the square, calling himself a freedman with the name supposed, as he already did in the hand of another master” (Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal, 1861, p. 4).

The practice of using slaves to carry letters and messages can also be verified in the literature. In the book *Maria Dusá*, for example, one reads: “I sent our slave Joaquim with a letter to Dindinha, participating in my marriage”. The practice also appears in an excerpt from *A Moreninha* by Joaquim Manuel de Macedo: the slave Tobias spoke very well the Portuguese language: “Tobias, my master’s slave, creole of qualities, faithful as a dog and

alive as a cat. The bastard of the creole was a Portuguese-speaking classic. I continued. - You have to take a message to Mrs. D. Joana” (Macedo, 1844, p. 11).



UM BOM CRIADO MALCRIADO.

Estas são as consequências, quando se ensina aos moleques a ler e escrever; ficam sendo conhecedores e confidentes de todos os nossos segredos!

Figure 2 – ‘A good servant naughty’.

Source: *A Semana Illustrada* (1872, p. 4668).

It is also important to note the existence of letters written by a slave. The historian Luiz Mott (1985) located a letter from 1770, written by the slave Esperança Garcia by her own hand to the Governor of the Province of Piauí:

I am a slave of Your Lordship of the administration of Captain Antonio Vieira de Couto, married. Ever since the captain was an administrator, he took me out of the cotton farm, where I lived with my husband, to be a cook at his house, where I step a hard time. The first is that there are great blows and no son of mine being a child that made him draw blood by the mouth, in me I cannot explain that I am a mattress of blows, so much that I fell knocked up once of the loft; by God’s mercy I escaped. The second one is me and my partners are not confessing for three years. And one of my children and two more to be baptized. For what I ask Your Lordship, for the love of God and for your courage, you must oblige them, say to the solicitor to send me to the farm where he took me to live with my husband and baptize my daughter. From Your Lordship Your slave Esperança Garcia (Moura, 2004, p. 171).

Based on the ad mapping of the newspaper *Gazeta de Notícias* published in the period from 1875 to 1888, it was able to observe ads for various purposes.

From the ads of escaped slaves, it is highlighted the case of Bruno, who was about to be sold, fled from Rua da Candelária in December, 1878. Pardo appeared to be 22 years old.

He was described as “[...] very intelligent and civilized, able to read and write, and perhaps impersonate free. Bruno was the son of a free black, living in Niterói, where the slave could have fled (Gazeta de Notícias, 1879, p. 4).

There were also announced cases of slaves who fled farms, such as Caetano, who fled from the farm of Mr. Francisco Paulo de Almeida, in Conservatória. Looking 30 years old, Caetano “[...] is a son from the north, but raised in Rio de Janeiro since he was a child, he is a confectioner, a butler, a nurse and a tailor, who knows how to read and write a little, walks on shows and very civilized, embarked to this court on April 6, at the Esteves station and D. Pedro II railway” (Gazeta de Notícias, 1880a, p. 6). Another fugitive from the ranch was the slave Claudio: “[...] light mulatto, 18 years old, knows how to read and write badly, likes to play, has no office other than that of nursemaid. It is suspected that he is hidden in this city, where he has known and is known, or has gone to the Court, where he has an aunt” (Gazeta de Notícias, 1880b, p. 6). Many of the slaves fled the farms and sought the Court as their destination.

From the set of ads ‘look for’, it is highlighted some aimed at looking for a girl or boy to ‘play’ with a child; in exchange, offered “house and food and education”: “Look for a small girl or small boy of 10 to 16 years to play with a child, clothes, home, food and education is given; in Morro da Providência, n. 7A (Gazeta de Notícias, 1878a, p. 5)”. There were those who evidenced the search for children who could read and write, to perform some tasks: “Look for a boy who knows how to read and write regularly, to read newspapers and letters to a sick gentleman, currently in Paquetá; it is in Rua do Ouvidor, n. 32” (Gazeta de Notícias, 1881, p. 6). In other announcements of look for, it was explicitly referred to the children taken as ‘of color’: “Look for, in Praça dos Lázarus, n. 28, a child of 8 to 10 years, and who is of color, to play with a boy. Clothes and small monthly payment are given” (Gazeta de Notícias, 1878b, p. 5). The ‘creation and education’ offer was also used in exchange for jobs provided by black children:

Look for a slave girl from 8 to 9 years old, for a couple’s house, to play with a 2-month-old girl, we teach her to read and write, we raise and educate, but not pay a salary, that is of good conduct and good genius. At Rua da Alfândega, n. 275 (Gazeta de Notícias, 1878c, p. 2).

From the 1870s, the education of the “naïve” was a constant pattern in the heated debates of politicians and intellectuals. The Church was an institution that also guided the debate on the education of the slaves’ children. In the pages of the newspaper *O Apóstolo*, in an article signed by Carmo Gama in September 1887, the question of responsibility on the part of the masters was put into discussion: “[...] it is high the number of those who, although born free by virtue of the law, continue to live as if they were not, by the blameworthy carelessness of those who are obliged to care for them”. In the article, it also stated: “[...] the number of naive people is enormous and perhaps not even half of that number is receiving the instruction that is due to”. While acknowledging that masters would have the obligation to educate the naive, the writer did not advocate the equality and full rights of the ‘slave children’:

We do not want this to mean that such tutors elevate these adopted children to the height they aspire to and seek for their legitimate children; no, and this would be a

futile desire, it would be a true utopia, an idea even unjust: law and society want them to give them the necessary instruction so that, taken from the low level of their parents, they can be citizens, good parents (O Apóstolo, 1887, p. 4).

Considering the content of the announcements and articles such as that of Carmo Gama in the *Apóstolo*, it is possible to dialogue with Mattoso's (1988) contributions regarding the 'slave child' and the implications of the Law of 1871. After all, "[...] when the son of slave ceases to be a child?" (Mattoso, 1988, p. 39). The ads themselves marked the distinctions between children and 'little black', 'boy', 'son of the slave': 'look for a black slave girl of 8 to 9 years to play with child'. If, before, the 'slave child' was treated as a commodity, with the law of the Free Womb, the relationship had to change.

From the point of view of the law, "the underage" became the responsibility of the master or the state:

The said underage children shall be in the power or under the authority of the masters of their mothers, who shall be obliged to raise and treat them until the age of eight full years. When the slave's son arrives at this age, the master of the mother will have the option of either receiving from the State the indemnification of 600\$000 or using the services of the child until the age of 21 years. In the first case, the Government will receive the child, and will give it destination, in accordance with this law (Brasil, 1871).

Charity and benevolence have come to be the claims of many for the supply of labor in exchange for clothing, education, and food. In this type of relation, there was no recognition of equality or remuneration for the work done by the so-called 'underage of color'.

The debate about the education of the naive was present in several newspapers. For example, in *Gazeta Nacional*, on June 5, 1887, the article *A educação dos ingênuos* was published. *Gazeta de Notícias* also reported on the debate about the education of the naive, according to Pessoa's analysis (2016). The pages of the newspapers also printed ads concerning the lottery in favor of the education of the naive:

GAZETA NACIONAL, Quarta-feira 11 de Janeiro de 1888

GRANDE LOTERIA DE PERNAMBUCO

PREMIO MAIOR **300:000\$000** PREMIO MAIOR

Extracção em 23 de Fevereiro de 1888
(GARANTIDA POR CLAUSULA ESPECIAL DO CONTRACTO DO THESOUREIRO COM A PROVINCIA)

A grande loteria de Pernambuco, em favor da educação dos ingenuos na colonia orphanologica — Isabel —, a qual está sendo recolhida, foi substituída, na firma da deliberação do Exm. presidente da provincia e segundo já tem sido annuciado, por outra, que será extrahida **IRREFRETERIVELMENTE** NO DIA 23 DE FEVEREIRO DO ANNO VINDOURO e cujo plano contem os premios e approximações seguintes :

	1 premio de	300.000\$000	
	1 dito de	50.000\$000	
	1 dito de	20.000\$000	
	3 ditos de	10.000\$000	
	10 ditos de	5.000\$000	
	15 ditos de	2.000\$000	
	30 ditos de	1.000\$000	
	50 ditos de	500\$000	
	80 ditos de	200\$000	
	150 ditos de	100\$000	
	700 premios de 50\$ para os dons algarismos finaes, iguaes ao do primeiro premio.		
	700 ditos de 30\$ para os dons algarismos finaes, iguaes aos do segundo premio.		
	7000 ditos de 20\$ para o algarismo final do primeiro premio.		
	2 approximações de 5:000\$ para o primeiro premio.		
	2 ditos de 2.000\$ para o segundo premio.		
	2 ditos de 1.000\$ para o terceiro premio.		

A nova loteria conta :
70.000 bilhetes a 20\$, divididos em meios, quartos e vigintimos; isto é, os preços dos bilhetes variam de 1/2 a 20\$000.

Esta loteria, em virtude de já ter dia marcado para sua extracção e estar á venda, acha-se exceptuada, conforme faz saber o aviso do ministerio da fazenda de 23 de Outubro proximo findo, da prohibição da venda de bilhetes, ultimamente decretada por lei.

Annuciada para — 23 de Fevereiro proximo — a extracção far-se-ha, portanto, **INFALLIVELMENTE**, neste dia, ainda quando dos bilhetes, ainda não muitos, que existem, alguns restem por vender, visto como, nos termos do acto presidencial, os bilhetes não vendidos ficarão por conta do thesoureiro interino commandador José Candido de Moraes, de quem é **LEGITIMO REPRESENTANTE** o abaixo assignado.

O publico deve, pois, ter plena certeza de que a **EXTRACÇÃO** não será adiada ou transferida por motivo algum, antes **TERÁ LOGAR ABSOLUTAMENTE NA EPOCA MARCADA**, do que o abaixo assignado dá a sua garantia pessoal.

Por isso mesmo convém que os possuidores de bilhetes da loteria primitiva, que ainda não acudiram a substitui-los pelos da nova loteria, **APRESSEM-SE A FAZER-O** no escriptorio do abaixo assignado, á rua do Hospicio n. 25, leja, como lhes aconselha o legitimo interessado.

E para maior esclarecimento dos interessados, aqui transcrevo os seguintes topicos do referido acto do presidente de Pernambuco, de 16 de Agosto ultimo, autorizando a substituição de uma por outra :

« Os bilhetes que não forem apresentados á troca até oito dias antes da extracção, serão relacionados por seus numeros, dando-se-lhes outros quaisquer numeros do valor correspondente, na presente loteria, fazendo-se disto uma relação que será publicada pela imprensa.

« O portador do bilhete primitivo tem direito ao novo numero que fór designado, quando reclamar, podendo depois da extracção receber o premio que sair em sorte.

« Na prestação de contas o thesoureiro recolherá ao thesouro provincial, em deposito, bilhetes e premios que não forem procurados.

« Dentro de um anno, a contar da data da extracção, ainda o portador do bilhete poderá apresentar sua reclamação perante o thesouro provincial.

« Findo esse prazo, os valores em deposito prescreverão em favor da provincia, sendo considerados renda eventual, na forma da legislação vigente, se a assembleia provincial não resolver a conversão em beneficio da Colonia Orphanologica Isabel.

Dos bilhetes a vender desta loteria, os que forem pedidos por agentes das provincias ou particulares serão remetidos por esta agencia sem augmento de despeza por frete, seguro ou sello do correio, correndo todas por conta do abaixo assignado.

FRANCISCO GONÇALVES DE QUEIROZ.

Figure 3- Grande Loteria de Pernambuco.

Source: Gazeta Nacional (1888).

The theme of education of the naive has been explored by different researchers in the field of History of Education (Barros, 2013, Martinez & Pessanha, 2012), which highlight the complexity of the problem and the tensions surrounding the law of 1871.

In the other periodicals analyzed, the number of occurrences involving slaves who could read and write was smaller. From the newspaper *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, I would like to highlight the announcement of the brown José,

[...] son of the North, thin, short, with a round face, a little beard, speaking comprehensively, intelligent and astute, cooker, cobbler, butler, nursemaid. He knows how to read and write, he calls himself a forro, and he adopts pompous names, having been in the correction institution several times, where he was beaten (*Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 1863, p. 4).

He also had the habit of changing his name and walking pm shoes, the mulatto slave named Cândido, for which it was offered a reward of 300\$000. Among the characteristics attributed to Cândido:

He is very talkative, very charlatan, knows how to read and write a little, he is tailor, cook and whip: impersonates forro, walks on shoes and maybe has changed the name, that already did it. He was a slave of Mr. José Pinto de Figueiredo de Souza Vilhena, of Barra de São João, and currently in the province of Rio Grande do Sul, and for months has been found in Vassouras, as a buddy of a subject traveling from the court to the province of Minas, the border town of Rio de Janeiro (*Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, 1861, p. 3).

In general, the number of ads of male slaves born in Brazil who could read and write was greater; there were few announcements concerning slave women who could read, write, and count.

It was found some mentions to literate Africans, such as the Narciso slave of the Angola nation, who fled dressed in a green cloth jacket, trousers and a hare's hat, "[...] also carrying more good clothes which he can use to disguise himself, can read and write a little, maybe want to call himself as a freedman". Also according to the announcement:

It is suspected that he was seduced for not having the habit of fleeing and even not knowing the streets of this city, where he arrived few days ago for the first time with his owner Antonio Carlos Vieira de Souza. It is expected that any of the above shall not receive him on board, against which he shall proceed with all the rigor of the law, and if he is asked if they had knowledge of him, communicate in Rua de Bragança, n. 7, where his master is responsible for any expense that becomes necessary for the capture of said slave beyond his recognition (Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal, 1857, p. 3).

The pedestrians were also warned of the escape of Guilherme, of Benguella nation, who also wore clothes to disguise himself, signed with the name of Guilherme Marques da Silva and had as characteristics: "[...] regular stature, little beard and only on the chin, can read and write" (Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal, 1861, p. 3), the habit of "[...] wearing cashmere trousers and denim jacket, walks in slippers". They were also warned of the escape of the slave Felipe, from Mozambique, 32, who besides being able to read and write, "[...] is a cook and sold bread on the morro do Castello" (Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal, 1860, p. 3). Augusto, of Mina nation, also "[...] wore shoes and knows how to read and write a little" (Correio Mercantil, e Instructivo, Politico, Universal, 1859b, p. 4).

From the set of the announcements of *Jornal do Commercio*, it is evident that they also knew how to read and write: the Africans Manoel, of Congo nation, João Azar, of Cabinda nation, Narciso, Angola nation, Amado, Quilimane nation, Felipe, Benguella nation, Manoel, Mussange nation and Augustine, African.

Speaking the Portuguese language was another aspect emphasized in the ads, since speech was a mark of distinction between Brazilian-born slaves and African slaves:

The mixture between Portuguese and African languages, however, began even before the Africans landed in Brazil. In certain parts of Africa, Portuguese was also used as a lingua franca in activities linked to the Portuguese Colonial Empire. Learning would obey the practical demands for slave labor, involving slave owners and masters, but it carried a broader symbolic sense that, by learning a civilized language, the slave would gain a homeland in a way that was correlated to his Christianization (Lima, 2007, p. 2).

The Africans mentioned in the ads were able to read and write in Portuguese, differently from the conclusion of studies on African literate in Arabian language. Certainly, such slaves valued education in different ways, with literacy being one of them. Through the contributions of Reis (2003), we know of the importance of learning Arabic writing and

reading for the organization of the Malê revolt in Bahia in 1835: “Malês who knew how to read and write Arabic were slaves or freed, passed on their knowledge to others. They met at the corners to offer their services, and while they were waiting for the customers, they were engaged in religion and rebellion” (Reis, 2003, p. 125).

Addressing the slave schools, Koranic madrassas, Mello (2015) explores the relationship between reading and writing among Malês, saying that “[...] learning to write the certainly gives power to those who possess it” (Mello, 2015, p. 91). The existence of slaves who read the Koran was also verified in Rio de Janeiro, between the so-called *minas*. Such slaves were consumers of books sold by French booksellers. According to the author, “[...] this explains why Fauchon and Dupont also imported Arabic-language grammars, with explanations in French. And that these slaves and former slaves strove to study the language so that they could read and understand the book” (Mello, 2015, p. 133). The author’s observations are based on the correspondence of the French minister Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882) regarding his trip to Brazil:

The slaves, evidently very poor, turn out to be great sacrifices to buy a volume. Sometimes it took a year to get even with the bookseller. The number of copies of the Koran sold annually amounts to about one hundred copies, the purchase of which is accompanied by the acquisition of Arabic grammars written in French (Gobineau & Raymond, 1990 apud Mello, 2015, p. 134).

If there are reports of the purchase of the Koran by slaves, such practice could also be possible in the purchase of textbooks, booklets and other books in Portuguese language. Slaves could be consumers of books sold in Rio de Janeiro, a literate city, with an expressive number of bookstores, schools and circulation of knowledge throughout the nineteenth century (Silva, 2015). Regarding the growing increase of the literate population in the city of Rio de Janeiro and seeking to position better in this business, the different commercial houses became specialized in different products and public (Abreu & Schapochnik, 2009).

Still regarding Muslim slaves, Mello (2016) points out that many of them, captured in war or military action, “[...] had received at least some level of education in the Koranic schools. In some cases, they went far beyond the first letters” (Mello, 2015, p. 141). I agree with the author about the possibility of thinking about the existence of schools of Africans, since the enslaved subjects brought in their baggage cultures, experiences and knowledge.

It is incredible to admit that the export of European ideas, especially since the children of the rich of the Americas went to study in Europe, were accepted without question and always to the detriment of what the enslaved, literate people also brought from their long and tortuous voyages from the African coast to the Americas. It is a fact that some of the Muslims trafficked to the Americas have revealed a high degree of erudition, capable of resisting even the trickery of memory (Mello, 2015, p. 245).

In mapping the ads on slaves published in the period from 1830 to 1888 in search of evidence that some could read and write, it was considered the important contribution of Chalhoub (2007), in thinking about how different it is to be a slave or a freedman in Brazil, in the different decades of Imperial Brazil, since there were intense changes in the legislation regarding slavery in the Empire, specifically around 1870: “[...] the new slave legislation

opened other paths to the slaves and gave hope to the freedmen, enabling them new strategies of struggle and, perhaps, lessening their sense of precariousness in relation to their conditions of life” (Chalhoub, 2007, p. 220). For the author:

Until the mid-1830s, the very future of slavery was at stake because a law prohibited slave trade and political forces willing to discuss the future of the institution. In the 1840s, on the contrary, the imperial state had become a guarantor of slavery, failing to combat African smuggling, and taking steps to legalize illegally acquired slave property. In short, a period of terror even for freed and free blacks, poor people whose precarious freedom could end in illegal enslavement (Chalhoub, 2007, p. 220).

Considering the abundance of advertisements in search of escaped slaves, it is possible to state that the fear of the freed and poor free, of color, in relation to illegal enslavement made sense. The slave-catching market could imprison freedmen and free because they were undocumented on the streets. Many of the fugitives who “claimed to be freedmen” could have been illegally enslaved.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The mapping of periodicals ads circulating in Rio de Janeiro between 1830 and 1888 allows us to glimpse the existence of slaves who dominated the written word code, which shows subjects in transit, holders of rich and varied cultures, knowledge and experiences. Speaking well, understandably, reading, writing, and counting were marks of distinction in the slave and hierarchical society of Imperial Brazil.

It is important to point out that researches have been developed in the field of the History of Education that contradict the premise of an absolute exclusion of slaves as regards access to education and education in the imperial period¹. As there were legal impediments to the presence of captives in schools in different periods and regions, it is necessary to consider the educational process broadly, beyond the school desks. The learning of the language, often through listening and orality, the learning of musical instruments and different professions, in different spaces and means, self-learning, are important actions in the understanding of the paths taken by the slaves towards the inclusion in the world of written culture.

The power of the word was also manifested in newspaper ads that were written for the purpose of stigmatizing and prosecuting slaves. The reading of the announcements to take notice of the escaped slaves also implied the formation of a readership.

If, on the one hand, the ads of fugitive slaves included the construction of the ‘dangerous type’, ‘suspect type’, on the other hand, ads for the sale of slaves sought to emphasize the positive aspects of the slave that was intended to be sold, ‘knows how to read, write and count’, ‘is agile’, ‘is intelligent’, ‘is wily’, ‘is smart’.

Thus, the ambiguity surrounding the slaves who mastered reading and writing must be called into question. There were masters who profited by investing in the education of

¹ In this respect, I highlight important references: : Silva, 2002; Barros, 2005; Fonseca, 2007; Veiga, 2008, among others.

slaves, who became more valuable in the market. Reading and writing, on the other hand, was a form of resistance and a means of survival and camouflage, as a forro, in a society that persecuted and stigmatized the bodies, speeches and gestures of slaves. The word had power. For many slaves, it was the way to overcome slavery. Education, the learning of reading and writing, indicated the paths to freedom.

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Nota: A.L. da Silva was responsible for the design, analysis and interpretation of the data; writing of the manuscript, critical revision of the content and approval of the final version to be published.

Como citar este artigo: Silva, A. L. da (2018). O saber que se anuncia: o poder da palavra em tempos de escravidão (Rio de Janeiro, 1830 a 1888). *Revista Brasileira de História da Educação*, 18. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4025/rbhe.v18.2018.e002>

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