

The Records of the *Conselho Ultramarino* as a Common Archival Heritage: A Contribution to their History ¹

A documentação do Conselho Ultramarino como património arquivístico comum: subsídios à sua história

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RESUMO

Ao estudar aspetos da trajetória dos arquivos do Conselho Ultramarino e da Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos, órgãos da administração colonial portuguesa central e os reflexos no uso da documentação, este artigo analisa a organização atual desses arquivos e chama a atenção para precauções metodológicas essenciais na recuperação de informação. Ao abordar as raízes da constituição das séries geográficas por meio da pesquisa histórica, utiliza-se como exemplo a série da capitania de São Paulo e sublinha-se a variabilidade das configurações administrativas do Brasil colonial. Com o conhecimento adquirido através do estudo desses arquivos enquanto objeto, apontamos para o imperativo do relacionamento entre documentos de várias séries de modo a obter uma visão

ABSTRACT

Through a study of aspects of the historical trajectory of the archives of the *Conselho Ultramarino* (Overseas Council) and the *Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos* (State Department of Naval Affairs and Overseas Domains), institutions of the central Portuguese colonial administration and the reflexes of this history in the use of the documentation, this article analyses the present-day arrangement of these archives. It also highlights the need to take basic methodological precautions when recovering information present in archives. In exploring the roots of the constitution of the “geographical series” by means of historical research, the author takes as an example the archival series of the Captaincy of São Paulo and emphasizes the variability in the administrative configurations of Colonial Brazil. Informed by the ex-

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mais próxima do que terá acontecido no passado.

Palavras-chave: Conselho Ultramarino; história dos arquivos; arquivos coloniais.

amination of these archives, the article stresses the need to understand the relations existing between documents from various series in order to obtain a clearer insight into events of the past.

Keywords: Overseas Council; history of archives; colonial archives.

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A portion of the archives relating to Brazil that still survive today are held by Portugal and other countries and communities that, in a colonial setting, were administrated by the same entities based in Lisbon, conceived as a whole, but responding to the variety of different information transmitted through the administrative and government bodies in the colonies. The *Conselho Ultramarino* (Overseas Council), from 1642-1643, and the *Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos* (State Department of Naval Affairs and Overseas Domains), from 1736 and especially from the mid-eighteenth century, constituted the main hubs of Portuguese colonial administration with respect to Brazil. This situation continued until the inversion of the territory's colonial status in 1808, which occurred with the transfer of the royal family and government to Rio de Janeiro to preserve Portugal's political independence.

The core material of the archives of both entities forms the structure of what is conventionally called the archival fonds 'do *Conselho Ultramarino*' held at the *Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino* (AHU: Overseas Historical Archive) in Lisbon.

The *Conselho Ultramarino* functioned until 1833 with important alterations made as early as the mid-eighteenth century and deeper changes between 1808 and 1821, the period during which its activity declined in political influence.

The *Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios da Marinha e Conquistas ou Domínios Ultramarinos* – created in 1736 alongside two other new State departments, the *Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios Estrangeiros e da Guerra* (Foreign Affairs and War) and the *Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios do Reino* (Affairs of the Kingdom) – was reorganised several times during the Portuguese

Constitutional Monarchy, which followed the 1820 Revolution and Brazil's subsequent independence. These restructurings related, in particular, to shrinking the Navy and redistributing responsibility for overseas affairs to other State departments for brief periods in 1821 and 1834.

In 1835, Naval and Overseas affairs once again came under the governance of the same State department and the archives produced by the latter until 1910-1911 form a different set of records at the AHU to the *Conselho Ultramarino* holdings.

A third archival provenance, less significant, is composed of the documents pertaining to the *Conselho da Fazenda* (Treasury Council, created by King Phillip II of Spain in 1591), transferred to the *Conselho Ultramarino* to assist in the execution of various financial activities inherited by the latter from the former.

The holdings of the *Conselho Ultramarino* have still other provenances, especially in terms of documentation stemming from the accumulation or succession of posts held by particular members of government, including, for instance, records produced as part of the functions occupied by D. Diogo Mendonça Corte Real, secretary of state to King Dom John V between 1707 and 1736. Besides diplomatic affairs, Corte Real was responsible for the *Secretaria das Mercês* (Office of Rewards), *Secretaria do Expediente e Assinaturas* (Office of Administrative Affairs), the work of *mordomo-mor* (high steward of the royal household), and the expedition of the affairs related to the offices of *monteiro-mor* (head of the royal hunt) and of *Provedor das obras do Paço* (chief administrator of works of the Royal Palace) (Miranda, 2009).

Finally, the holdings include archives created in Portuguese colonies and on occasion sent to Lisbon, as occurred with the documentation of the governors-general of Angola and Mozambique between 1891 and 1896 at the initiative of António Enes (Fitzler, 1928: Introduction by Ernesto Enes and p. 133), in particular for reasons of conservation. The loose papers transferred in this process ended up included, between the end of the 1970s and the next decade, in the respective geographic series of the archival fonds of the *Conselho Ultramarino*.² This decision requires extra care to be taken to contextualize and describe them correctly. Some distinctive external characteristics of these documents, such as the type of paper and their dimension, help distinguish from what archives they originally were.

Different vicissitudes – unsurprising given the considerable life-time of these central institutions of the Portuguese colonial administration and their respective archives – have affected the holdings in ways that are not always entirely clear. Natural accidents, wars, administrative reorganisations, changes in the politicians responsible, transfers of services and archives, involuntary or improper withholding of documents and a lack of qualified personnel all had impacts on these archives, sometimes negatively.

The termination of functions or the death of the person exercising them – at various levels, but especially among clerks producing and keeping records – was not always accompanied by the cataloguing and compulsory return of the documentation of the royal service, that is, the State.

In relation to the *Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos*, it is known, for example, that on the death of the King Dom John V, on July 31st 1750, the archive was in such a state of confusion that, in the words of the recently appointed secretary of state Diogo Mendonça Corte Real (the son), even a letter to the queen of Spain was forgotten and not sent by the Royal Mail in due time (Korobtchenko, 2011, p. 39, n. 110).

After the 1755 earthquake, the archive of the *Conselho Ultramarino* was itself transferred to the house of councillor Alexandre de Metelo de Souza e Meneses, located in Campo do Curral, today Campo Santana or Campo dos Mártires da Pátria (Miranda, 2009). It was held in disorganised form close to Santo Antão, in the Palácio da Anunciada, at the houses of the Lavre, secretaries of the Council until 1796, when it was moved to Rua do Ouro, close to the Terreiro do Paço (Bicalho, 2011, pp. 308, 310, 311).

The confusion of papers and books was likewise observed in the archives of the colonial administration of the Captaincy of São Paulo by the governor Dom Luís António de Sousa, for example, in 1773, apropos the *Junta da Real Fazenda* and the old *Provedoria*, as he called it. Dom Luís also cited the difficulty of finding trained personnel in the captaincy, specifically copyists and accountants.³

This problem included posts as important to the constitution, organisation and functioning of the archives as the secretary of the Governor of the Captaincy and even, in some instances, the secretary of the *Conselho Ultramarino* or the head officer of the *Secretaria de Estado*. Documents from these institutions contain various references to candidacies, required applicant

profiles and the need to adequately remunerate staff, as Caio Boschi has finely studied, specifically in relation to secretaries of the government of the Captaincy of Minas Gerais (Boschi, 2011). The *Conselho Ultramarino*, for example, in 1711, mentioned the absence of a response to the announcement of a vacancy for the post of secretary of the Captaincy of São Paulo and Minas, posted for a long time on the doors of the *Conselho* and other places. At the same time, it considered the officials of the *Secretaria de Estado* to be extremely helpful and possessing an admirable knowledge of affairs, but believed that they should earn more.⁴

On November 1st 1755 an earthquake caused immense destruction of the Royal Palace on the Terreiro do Paço, where the *Secretarias de Estado* and *Conselho* usually functioned, the latter alongside the *Casa da Índia* and the Treasury Council. Although the earthquake was not responsible for all the gaps in the documentation of the *Conselho Ultramarino* and the *Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos*, the subsequent fire consumed a number of volumes, some of which were replaced years later with reconstituted copies, as occurred with the record book of councillors of the *Conselho Ultramarino* dated 1642-1761 (Caetano, 1968, p. 53).

Subsequently the trajectories of these and other archives were marked by the Napoleonic Wars and the relocation of the Portuguese Court to Brazil in 1807-1808, the French occupation of the Kingdom, the Anglo-Luso military response, the continued British presence, the 1820 Revolution and the return of the Court to Lisbon in 1821. On one hand, they led to a successful transatlantic operation of transferring archives (and libraries) in both directions, despite numerous obstacles. On the other hand, the militarization of day-to-day life in the metropolitan Portugal incited the concern of archivists, specifically the bookkeepers of the *Conselho Ultramarino*, over the fire risk posed by the proximity of military depots.⁵ In parallel, alterations were made in the circuits of governance, reflected in the organisation of the archives of the *Conselho Ultramarino* and the *Secretaria de Estado* (Martins, 2007, pp. 63, 94, 121-123, 126, 200, 313, 341). After the king's return to Lisbon, reports emerge in 1822 of a change to the Council's installations, including the archives,⁶ and, some years later, in 1826, of a new concern with the situation of the building of Pátio das Vacas, in Belém, not far from the Jerónimos Convent, where the registry office of the *Secretaria de Estado* was located.⁷

The civil war in Portugal between supporters of Dom Pedro, the first emperor of Brazil and future Pedro IV of Portugal, and those of his brother

Dom Miguel, also led to transfers of archives, mainly those of the *Conselho Ultramarino*, as early as 1828, by supporters of the latter.

In 1842, following the abolition of the *Conselho Ultramarino* in 1833, which stipulated the transfer of the archive to the *Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e Ultramar*, Filipe Roberto da Silva Stockler, former archivist and registrar of the *Conselho* proposed a draft organization of its archive. In the case of the loose papers, he proposed organizing them by type of document – Notices, Consultations, Decrees, Reminders, Service Papers and Petitions, to which a section of Miscellanea would be added – and by the year in which they had been processed. He also called attention to the importance, in terms of utilization of the archive, of the Entry Books relating to the Dispatches of the Council and the Record Books, including those of Letters, of Decrees, of Provisions and of Orders⁸ – recorded in the same book or different books, depending possibly on the number of documents. Around 1856, the set of volumes of the *Conselho Ultramarino* found in the *Secretaria de Estado* was recorded in a list that mentioned their good state of conservation.⁹

Decades later, in 1889, the documentation of the archives of the *Conselho Ultramarino* and of the *Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos* was already heavily mixed according to Rafael Eduardo Azevedo de Basto. As curator of the *Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo*, he produced a list of the material held by the institution when it was transferred from the Arsenal in Terreiro do Paço to the *Biblioteca Nacional* (National Library) in Chiado. At the *Biblioteca Nacional* this documentation formed in 1901 the basis of the *Secção do Arquivo de Marinha e Ultramar* (Navy and Overseas Archive Section), named the *Secção de Marinha e Ultramar* in 1918-1919 (Miranda, 2009; Fitzler, 1928; Pereira, 1902).

It should also be noted that in 1894 around a dozen volumes from the archive of the *Conselho Ultramarino*, perhaps originally coming from the *Conselho da Fazenda*, were transferred from the so-called *Arquivo dos Bens Próprios Nacionais* (Archive of National Assets, constituted in the context of the abolition in 1834 of the religious orders and the sale of their respective assets) to the *Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo*, where they are found today.

At the *Biblioteca Nacional* work began on the reorganisation of the loose papers of the *Conselho Ultramarino*, also including records from the *Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos*, in geographic series. This work aimed at developing access tools, as was the case of the

catalogues of Madeira and Porto Santo, followed soon after by those of Bahia and Rio de Janeiro (in an agreement with Brazil), all authored by Castro e Almeida (Almeida, 1907-1909; Almeida, 1913-1951).

In 1931, the creation of the *Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino* (Overseas Historical Archive, AHU), then called the Colonial Archive, led to the transfer of this documentation to the Ega Palace, with some residual material still held today at the *Biblioteca Nacional* of Portugal in the Reserved section (Codices and Loose Manuscripts) and in the General Collection and Cartography sections. The archival provenance of this documentation is yet to be systematically established on an individual basis.¹⁰ In some cases, though, it was possible to identify this provenance, associating separate documents between collections and/or between holding entities, especially the main textual documents and their respective appendices.¹¹

Meanwhile at AHU the geographic organisation of the loose papers continued, although in 1950, Alberto Iria, director between 1946 and 1975, had expressed a clear preference for respecting former organisations, at least in relation to grouping documents from a particular period by themes and especially by acts and typologies: incoming and outgoing correspondence, notices, memorandums, concessions of *sesmarias* (land concession), consultations, petitions, royal contracts, service papers, provisions, ordinances, decrees and so on. These organisations were collated under a chronological and sometimes geographic order, plus alphabetical ordering by first name, as in the case of the petitions, for example. Iria, however, prudent when it came to respecting earlier forms of organisation, was at the same time pragmatic in terms of the unfeasibility of reverting to the geographic organisation of the loose papers (Iria, 1950). Indeed, this was the situation faced by the *Resgate* – Baron of Rio Branco project in the archival treatment of the loose papers relating to Brazil in the 1990s.

In this context, it should be noted how distant these geographic series could be in relation to possible systems or, more modestly, forms of organisation of sets of these documents. This distance, combined with the variability of the geographic context of the organic structures of government and colonial administration, condition the activity of archival organisation and description. All the more so in the case of the series of loose papers from Brazil, considering the scale of the documentation and the various alterations seen in the administrative configuration of the captaincies over a 180-year period. The decision to associate a particular document with one geographic series of Brazil rather

than another was not always clear and the criteria sometimes varied. It is important to recognise above all that the connections between documents from the diverse series are much greater than might initially be thought, and that important information on a particular event happening in one captaincy may also be found in a series pertaining to another. Knowledge of these aspects of the history of the archives themselves may be dispensable when used in the artistic reappropriation of documents, for example, but generally speaking it helps provide a truer picture through the utilization of the information contained in them, specifically by those engaged in historical investigation.

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We can provide substance here by observing, for example, what happened to the documentation and informative contents of the archival holdings of the *Conselho Ultramarino* relating to the captaincy of São Paulo.

As with all western archives based on writing and especially on paper, those of the *Conselho Ultramarino* include first of all record books and other tools for controlling the inflow, outflow and internal circulation of the documentation issued and received by the council itself, the *Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos*, and, at a smaller scale, the *Conselho da Fazenda*, prior to 1642. Known as codices, these instruments were bound differently depending on whether they pertained to the *Conselho Ultramarino* archive or the *Secretaria de Estado* archive. In general, the former are bound entirely in sheepskin, decorated with dry tooling and the royal arms on the folders, sometimes the armillary sphere and the Order of Christ's cross, with five or six ribs on the spines. The labels, on painted sheepskin, are decorated with gold, or on paper with the number, title or content and the date range of the book. Those of the *Secretaria de Estado* are bound entirely in parchment, with two ribs on the spine, covered in red sheepskin with strips of white suede. The title or content and the date range are written on the parchment in ink (Martinheira, 2001).

The recent description of these books, and especially the identification of the institution to whose archive they belonged, was naturally easier than describing the loose papers, including because of this obvious difference in the external characteristics, in many cases supplemented by terms of opening and closure, as well as original numbering at source.

The records were frequently made from a full copy of the document, albeit rarely including the appendices, in many cases only referenced. Relevant appendices, such as lists of botanical species, begin to be copied in the second half of the eighteenth century. The codices sometimes have their own indices, the organisation of which varied: frequently by the first name of the individual or entity that initiated the administrative procedure, not always clearly ordered; at other times more a catalogue than an index, purely by the record order, summarizing the content of the document in question.

Not existing for the entire period over which the institutions functioned, whether because they were never created or because they have not survived to the present, the record books that remain function almost as keys to access other documents and further information, as the official archivist Stockler knew well. On one hand, the record books present informational contents not always present in the loose papers of the *Conselho Ultramarino*; on the other, even when they comprise summaries or copies of loose papers in this or other archival fonds, the record books can provide additional information on the administrative processing and decision-making circuits. In certain cases, they allow the identification of the agents and entities involved in the creation of the documents and the reconstruction of dispatch procedures and the intricacies of power at various levels and in different forms. Such applies to those books that record, very often through copies, the documents sent to the government of the Captaincy of São Paulo, and a portion of those received, whether from the latter government or from other entities, but related to the captaincy.

Still in relation to these record books, it should be observed that in the case of both the *Conselho Ultramarino* and the *Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e Domínios Ultramarinos*, the books were only produced according to geographic-administrative areas for certain types of documents and/or specific chronological periods, generally associated with a higher volume of documents. In the *Conselho Ultramarino* holdings for the Captaincy of São Paulo, this is the case of the two record books of royal charters, provisions and other orders dated from between 1726 and 1806 and another two record books of consultations, dated from 1726 to 1809. In the *Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos* holdings there are another two record books of royal orders and notices specific to São Paulo, dated between 1765, the year when the governance of Dom Luís António de Sousa (later Morgado de Mateus) began, and 1821, the year of the return of King Dom João VI to Portugal.

Many of the record books were created to recover documents according to typology and also subject, combined with the names of persons and entities and a chronological reference. We can cite, for example, the numerous record books of consultations, in particular the consultations of parties, which constitute 45 volumes between 1620 and 1833. The information contained in them could be cross-referenced with the information from the entry books (*livros de porta*), 25 of which are known to be held in the *Conselho Ultramarino* archives (1731-1832) and 55 in the *Secretaria de Estado* archives (1796-1835). These volumes recorded the date of arrival and dispatch of petitions that frequently gave rise to these consultations, as well as the name of the requester or legal representative. They also recorded the return of documents, in part because the appendices to the petitions – usually paid certificates – could be reused.

The operational systems of both entities certainly had some impact on the ways in which their respective archives were organised, but it has yet to be ascertained to what extent this actually happened. The scheduling of the dispatch varied according to the nature of the matter at hand and the geographic-administrative area concerned, as well as the corresponding degree of urgency and relevance. When the *Conselho Ultramarino* was set up, Article 10 of its Statute identified the latter as general principles: “one should begin with the most important and demanding the quickest response.” Three years later, in 1645, Thursdays and Fridays were allocated to affairs relating to Brazil, the other three weekdays to India, and Saturdays to Guinea, Cape Verde and other ‘conquests.’ But as soon as the following year, one morning per week was dedicated to the dispatch of rewards, which in 1663 was on Thursdays (Caetano, 1968, pp. 48-49, 121). Many years later, in 1805, this day was in turn dedicated to individual requests dispatched by the state secretary of *Negócios da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos* – and of *Negócios do Reino* (Almeida, 2008, p. 344, n. 904).

As suggested earlier, the organisation – or rather the diverse forms of organisation – assumed by the loose papers in the archives of the two institutions of the central colonial administration are much more difficult to reconstitute, and the distinction between the provenance of the documents is not always evident, even when consulting the surviving record books. The decision to constitute geographic series, as pointed out already, had been the one possible and perhaps enabled quicker access to the information contained in the documents. However, we need to keep in mind the diverse territorial configurations and administrative dependence of the Captaincy of São Paulo (like the

case of other captaincies) in order to have a more accurate vision of the possible localization of documents and information relating to it in the archival holdings of the *Conselho Ultramarino*.

We can rapidly recall the main landmarks in these reconfigurations of the colonial administration of Brazil's spaces, which became clearer following the abandonment of the figure of the *donatários* (recipients of land ceded by the Crown), who declined in importance in the second half of the seventeenth century. The Captaincy of São Paulo and Minas do Ouro was created on November 9th 1709 after the Crown's acquisition of the Captaincy of São Vicente. Inducted in São Paulo on June 12th 1710, the first governor, António de Albuquerque Coelho, moved to Ribeirão do Carmo, with his successors residing in Minas Gerais (Silva, 2009). Until the constitution of a new captaincy on December 2nd 1720, Minas Gerais was the area of main interest of the governance of the Captaincy of São Paulo, and the documentation of the latter was held in the Minas government.

On the other hand, under the government of Rodrigo César Meneses, between 1721 and 1728, it was necessary to gather documentation, especially in Rio de Janeiro. The king also had to order the governor of Minas Gerais to send copies of documents of interest to São Paulo. But the opposite also happened. In April 1726, the chief justice (*ouvidor-geral*) of Paranaguá wrote to King Dom João V, informing him that he had asked the chief justice of São Paulo to separate the books belonging to the Chief Justice's Office (*ouvidoria*) of Paranaguá, since the latter had been detached from the São Paulo office.

In 1748 São Paulo was added to the Captaincy of Rio de Janeiro, which, the following year, meant the transfer of documents to the latter city via Santos. It also meant the subsequent creation and accumulation of documents relating to São Paulo in the Captaincy of Rio de Janeiro, in coordination with the *Conselho Ultramarino* and with the *Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos* in Lisbon.

In 1765, São Paulo was returned to the status of captaincy, although it lost areas to the captaincies of Goiás and Mato Grosso. It was left with the territory of the present-day states of São Paulo and Paraná and part of the state of Santa Catarina. Throughout this entire period, and until the independence of Brazil, other less significant changes can be noted at the territorial level of the government of the Captaincy of São Paulo, such as the integration of the Lages region into the Captaincy of Santa Catarina in 1820 (Silva, 2009).

These kinds of administrative changes had an impact not only on the archives of the government departments of the captaincies in Brazilian territories, but also on the archive of the *Conselho Ultramarino*, and from 1736 – and above all the middle of the eighteenth century – on the archive of the *Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos*.

In the case of the loose papers, even when aware of all the alterations made, the use of geographic location to organize the series posed various difficulties when describing the documents. Simultaneously, this complex trajectory means that the search for information on the Captaincy of São Paulo should not be limited to the respective document series. Indeed, this series itself possesses two finding aids, one resulting from the so-called Mendes Gouveia catalogue, since revised (Arruda et al., 2000), and the other produced from scratch as part of the *Resgate* Project (Arruda et al., 2002). The research on São Paulo should be extended, therefore, to the series of loose papers of Rio de Janeiro and – especially in determined periods and apropos particular topics or individuals – to other series of Brazil, including the series “Brasil-Geral”, and even the series relating to other spaces of the Portuguese overseas administration. We should remember that the Portuguese overseas governance – shaped in response to the ever-changing realities of the Atlantic, the Indian Ocean and the China Seas – considered these colonies as a global whole, albeit with greater or lesser success and always, of course, according to its own interests, themselves variable and sometimes contradictory. Questions like slave traffic, the search for natural resources and their transformation, or the circulation of products, all deeply connected Brazilian spaces and communities, including the Captaincy of São Paulo, to African spaces and communities, especially on the Atlantic coast.¹² Both the record series of São Paulo and those of Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, the *Conselho Ultramarino* and even the *Reino* (metropolitan Portugal) series note these and other common experiences. Other questions, like the land concessions (*sesmarias*), whose documents, beyond their historic value, reacquired legal value, are not confined to the geographic series of the loose papers. On the other hand, phenomena like the mobility of persons, observable among multiple posts and positions in the various Portuguese colonies, are transversally documented in the archival holdings of the *Conselho Ultramarino*. For this reason it is necessary to pursue these sets of information through the different series of loose papers and record books and then compare them.

With the moving of the Portuguese Court to Rio de Janeiro in 1808, which, in terms of Brazilian historiography, marks the end of the period of Colonial Brazil, the correspondence of the Captaincy of São Paulo primarily became the responsibility of the central government based in Rio. The *Conselho Ultramarino*'s work practically vanished, distributed to the *Mesa da Consciência e Ordens* (Council for Religious and Military Orders Affairs) and to the *Desembargo do Paço* (High Court), recreated in Brazil, and also to the Supreme Military Council established there, with administrative tasks remaining in Lisbon, where a Council of Governors of the Kingdom functioned until 1820, aside from a brief interruption during the period of occupation by Napoleon's army. The *Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos* resumed in the Brazilian tropics the functions that already possessed previously, coordinating with Lisbon through the mediation of the Governor of the Kingdom responsible for Naval and Overseas issues. However, the affairs of Brazil, including those of the Captaincy of São Paulo, were integrated into the *Secretaria de Estado do Negócios do Reino* (State Department of Affairs of the Kingdom), renamed the Department of Affairs of Brazil and later the Department of the Kingdom of Brazil. In other words, for the period between 1808 and the independence of Brazil and the years immediately after, in relation to both the Captaincy of São Paulo and other Brazilian captaincies, it is advisable to consult, in addition to the *Conselho Ultramarino*'s holdings, the documentation of the *Mesa de Consciência e Ordens* (Table of Conscience and Orders) and of the *Desembargo do Paço*, as well as the records of the *Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios do Brasil* held in the *Arquivo Nacional* and also in the *Biblioteca Nacional do Brasil* in Rio de Janeiro (Martins, 2007, pp. 333-339).

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The geographically ample networks of information woven by the overseas Portuguese administration left long-term records in archives common to Brazil and Portugal and also to other countries and communities. These archives of institutions centralized in Lisbon, specifically the *Conselho Ultramarino* and the *Secretaria de Estado dos Negócios da Marinha e dos Domínios Ultramarinos*, have their own singular histories whose reconstruction will enable more judicious uses of the information that they contain. The

aim of this brief text has been to highlight the advantage of knowing what is behind the documentation produced by those archives, in the form that they are found today and that is never insignificant. An advantage that becomes a requirement in the case of the historian's work.

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NOTES

¹ I thank the suggestions made by the reviewers from *Revista Brasileira de História*.

² See, for example, Documents of Fazenda de Luanda sent by the governor André Vidal de Negreiros, Luanda, May 28, 1663 – August 16, 1668. AHU, CU, Angola, Cx.7, D. 830 and Conta N° 632 of José Caetano da I (?) to Baltazar Manuel Pereira do Lago, Interim Governor of Rios de Sena, Vila de Sena, February 20th 1761. AHU, CU, Mozambique, Cx. 56, D. 44. My thanks to José Sintra Martinheira for the reference to the documents.

³ 1773, July, 23, São Paulo, letter from (governor and captain-general of the Captaincy of São Paulo), Dom Luís Antônio de Sousa (Botelho Mourão) to (the State Secretary of Naval Affairs and Overseas Domains) Martinho de Melo e Castro. AHU, CU, 023-01, Cx.29, D. 2634

⁴ 1711, December, 11, Lisbon, consultation (minutes) of the *Conselho Ultramarino* on the provision of the office of secretary of the Captaincy of São Paulo and Minas (de Ouro), for which, complying with the orders of (Dom João V), public notices were posted. AHU, CU, 023-01, Cx. 1, D. 101.

⁵ [ant. 1812, August, 25, Lisbon], request of the bookkeeper of the *Conselho Ultramarino*, José Maria de Sousa Duarte Coutinho, to the prince regent [Dom João]. AHU, CU, 089, Cx. 16, D. 1466.

⁶ 1822, January, 15 – September, 10, Queluz, ordinances (9) of the State Secretary of the Affairs of the Realm, Filipe Ferreira de Araújo e Castro, to the *Conselho Ultramarino*. AHU, CU, Reino, Cx. 355, pasta 32.

⁷ 1826, August, 17 – 29, [Lisbon], notice and official letter of the [State Secretary of War], João Carlos de Saldanha de Oliveira Braun, to the minister and [State Secretary of Naval Affairs and Overseas Domains], Manuel Inácio da Costa Quintela. AHU, CU, Reino, Cx. 383, pasta 72.

⁸ System for archiving the papers of the extinct *Conselho Ultramarino* submitted for the approval of His Excellency Antônio Pedro de Carvalho, chief officer of the *Secretaria de Estado dos negócios da Marinha e Ultramar* on 28 November 1842. AHU, SEMU, s/n.

⁹ List of Books that belonged to the extinct *Conselho Ultramarino* and that today are found in the State Department of Naval Affairs and Overseas Domains, c. 1856. AHU, SEMU, s/n.

¹⁰ For an idea of this type of documentation at the *Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal*, although without referring specifically to the archival source, see BOSCHI, 2011a, pp. 209-217, and the cited access tools and bibliography.

¹¹ The case, for example, of STURM, Filipe, fl. 1750-1770. Floor plan of the residential house of R. P. Visitador, and vicar of Villa de Barcellos. [Post. 1755]. Referenced to the documentation of AHU, CU, Rio Negro (GARCIA, 2001, pp. 267-268). This and other examples (GARCIA, 2001, pp. 32, 194-196, 268-269) are taken from the investigation involving, among other institutions, the BNP and IICT, which resulted in the cited publication. My thanks to Maria Joaquina Feijão for the reference.

¹² See, specifically on the various ‘Configurations of the [colonial Portuguese] Empire,’ those who governed and administrated it, the connections between different spaces and economic activities, for example, BETHENCOURT, 1998a; 1998b; RUSSELL-WOOD, 1998a; 1998b; CHAUDHURI, 1998 and, previously, BOXER, 1981[1969], chapter 6-8.

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