

KILLING IMAGES:

Iconoclasm and the Art of Political Insult in Portuguese India (Sixteenth-Seventeenth Centuries)

Abstract:

The article builds on a succession of visually disturbing events occurred in Goa—the capital city of Portuguese India—during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. From the early years of the Portuguese conquest (1510), Goa went through a redefinition of its urban space, which implied the appropriation and re-semanticization of buildings and other key sites of the old Muslim city. This process included the spread of images and symbols related to several Portuguese viceroys, soon-to-be targets of acts of political insult and even political iconoclasm performed by their Portuguese opponents in a context of growing factionalism. We speak namely of episodes of protest against places of memory associated to different clans, encompassing statues (both official and bogus), textual inscriptions and viceroys' portraits. These were European phenomena to a large extent, but coloured by significant local and native elements. The article engages with a grid of questions that places real statues, satirical effigies, and erased faces (and the diverse reactions they have aroused) in dialogue with current debates on popular politics; high and low vis-à-vis the colonial social fabric; the uses of public space; verbal, written, and visual insult; political languages and disputed authority in an imperial setting.

Keywords:

Portuguese Empire; Goa; viceroys; political factionalism; visual dissent; public mockery

Introduction

The destruction of statues and portraits for political or religious purposes is an age-old custom. Scholars of imperial Rome will likely recall first how *damnatio memoriae* led to the mutilation and makeover of several imperial portraits, while to historians of early modern Korea what will immediately come to mind is the burning and burying of portraits and statues of kings of the Goryeo dynasty (918-1392) ordered by Joseon rulers, particularly Sejong (r. 1418-50).¹ In modern times, onlookers surely maintain a

vivid memory of Saddam Hussein's statue being toppled by Iraqi civilians in Bagdad in 2003. Dissent has also been communicated by less violent but equally subversive means, such as mordant satire; the life-size headstone of Donald Trump placed before dawn in New York City's Central Park on 27 March 2016 is an excellent case in point.

Public statuary and portraiture are powerful tools for the preservation of collective memory, community-building and identity construction. Sculpted or painted, the likeness of a political figure simulates proximity and conveys power. Those represented become omnipresent as the image dissolves distance, whether geographical, temporal or emotional.² At work is a highly effective mechanism of the "power of images," to recall Freedberg's celebrated book published three decades ago.³ At times of change and turmoil, however, when new social movements come to the fore or novel political orders arise, people often aim at severing such links. As symbols of authority, statues and portraits — together with other monuments and forms of imagery — become contested sites liable to erasure; in marring an image, one aims to eliminate its power or the power of whomever it represents. Statues and portraits often constitute the first purge "victims," for image-breaking simultaneously embodies rupture and revival.

The weight of an imperial past felt in the colony but also at home, provides abundant food for thought in this regard. Consider a couple of statues of the founder of Dutch Batavia, Jan Pieterszoon Coen (d. 1629). One was torn down in Jakarta in 1944 and the other was set to be removed in 2011 from the central square of his hometown, Hoorn but eventually became an example of "renegotiation of dissonant heritage."⁴ Coen, Batavia and the VOC can easily direct us to Afonso de Albuquerque (d. 1515), Goa and the *Estado da Índia*. Unsurprisingly, imperial portraits and statues turned into painful artifacts in Goa following the Portuguese demise in 1961. For totally different

reasons, however, we likewise find them at the heart of bitter debates that shook the city three and a half centuries before.

Located on the island of Tiswadi, in the Konkan Coast (India Peninsula), Goa was captured in 1510 by Albuquerque (g. 1509-15) for the sultanate of Bijapur, and it soon came to be the capital of the *Estado da Índia*. The city saw itself gradually transformed into an overseas sample of Portugal, replicating its institutions, political practices, social conventions, intellectual trends and religious attitudes. Regardless of considerable spatial and demographical shifts over time, Goa remained a confined space, one where the inner tensions and contradictions of colonial society tended to come to light. The distance between Goa and Lisbon helped to trigger local conflict and insubordination and translated into fragile authority and weak justice. Finally, moving from settlers to natives, the “indigenous factor” — from the *canarins* (as the local inhabitants of Goa were termed by the Portuguese) to myriad Asians of myriad stocks — decisively shaped the human and social landscape of Goa as a capital city of a European empire and the seat of power of successive viceroys.⁵

The post of viceroy (sometimes just governor) of the *Estado* was sought after by, and granted to, representatives of the Portuguese overseas nobility, a highly conflictive elite that over the centuries nourished individual, family and group clashes in Goa. Such collisions caused or accentuated the weakness of the institutional and symbolic dimensions of viceregal (therefore also royal) power, thus paving the way to moments of rather unstable leadership. The present study builds on several instances of sharp visual offense directed against different viceroys that occurred in Goa mostly during the Iberian Union — the sixty-year period between 1580-1640 in which the Crown of

Portugal was under the Spanish Habsburgs — and the early years of the “Restoration” (*Restauração*) of the Portuguese monarchy (1640).

We argue that one of the possible keys to such enquiry is the “art of insult,” to borrow the title of a well-known work by Peter Burke, namely political insult and satire through the use of acerbic pictorial language.⁶ The visual imagery at hand further suggests that we couple political insult with political iconoclasm. Early modern European iconoclasm is strongly associated with the sixteenth-century religious wars, which saw the destruction of countless Catholic images in Protestant regions.⁷ Nonetheless, symbols of belief often merged with symbols of power during the Dutch Revolt, as exemplified by the 1571 erection of the statue of the third Duke of Alba (d. 1582) in Antwerp. Removed a few years later by the Spaniards themselves, the statue became a Dutch target, from engravings parodying it to medals commemorating its alleged destruction.⁸ While our source material reveals an occasional intersection between the spiritual and temporal realms, the main focus of this article is political iconoclasm. We consider a series of acts that subverted the ordinary relationship between images and viceregal authority in the capital city of Goa by exposing the king’s representatives — as well as the symbols associated with their function — to considerable violence.

We seek to study traits and forms of Portuguese imperial political culture “on the ground”, focusing on Goa but simultaneously exploring contemporary parallelisms with, and connections to the Iberian World, Europe and beyond. In all cases analyzed below, viceregal statues — both perennial and ephemeral — or portraits overlapped with individual agendas, factional struggle, memory discourses and political communication, involving various social strata. Despite their differences, our cases

reveal many commonalities. The stories of these viceroys and their dangerous pictorial representations entail both obvious and hidden meanings, while the impact of the incidents at play allow us to explore intriguing aspects of the life of an early modern colonial city. Ultimately, we aim at contributing to a larger debate about the principles, modalities and disruptions of transmission of political authority between European metropolises and their imperial spaces in this period, by giving careful consideration to the specific nature of the overseas societies at stake.

This study is divided in three main parts corresponding to the types of objects and visual imagery present, from broken statues to defying dummies to restless paintings.

A War of Statues

Goa awoke in distress on the morning of 4 January 1601. The painted marble statue of Dom Vasco da Gama (d. 1524) — the centrepiece of the so-called Viceroys' Arch (*Arco dos vice-reis*), which one crossed when entering the city coming from the Mandovi River — was viciously mutilated, its fragments scattered around “public places.” It was a gruesome act, meant to convey an unmistakable message to those affiliated with the figure that had dominated Goa's political life in recent years — the Viceroy Dom Francisco da Gama (g. 1597-1600), fourth count of Vidigueira and great-grandson of the famed discoverer of the maritime route between Europe and India. The statue's head, together with one hand, were placed in the pillory (*Pelourinho*) — the sources do not specify whether it was the old or the new one — while the other hand was found on a corner of Main Street (*Rua Direita*), close to the auction area (*Leilão*). One arm was left suspended on the city's gate that granted access to Slaughterhouse Street (*Rua do*

Açougue). Other pieces of the severed statue were shown to some of the Gama's associates as a sign of defiance, like part of the beard that was brought to Afonso Teles de Meneses. Amaro da Rocha (who was accused of promoting the "insult," as the statue's destruction was significantly dubbed), for his part, exhibited the other arm in his farmhouse. At any rate, the symbolism of such an act was crystal clear: Gama, and by extension, all those representing his clan, deserved the fate of the worst criminals, namely execution by beheading and dismemberment.⁹

The mutilation of statues was a common practice in early modern Europe. Located in the Roman Capitol, the statue of Pope Paul IV (g. 1555-9) was heavily disfigured during the tumults that followed his death in 1559. Nose and ears were cut, thus signifying the loss of face, that is to say, honour. Some children then rolled the statue's head throughout the streets of Rome until throwing it into the Tiber River, this being the usual treatment given to traitors' bodies. At the same time, satirical papers, rather critical of the deceased pope, were to be found in every corner of the city.¹⁰ But the wrecking of Gama's statue seems to correspond to a moment of real rupture in the fragile political balance of the capital of Portuguese Asia. True, Goa had been since its conquest in 1510 a privileged arena for violent rivalries amongst its Portuguese elites.¹¹ Yet, this unique affront triggered new forms of political communication and struggle in a particular urban context. Gama's statue had been placed, most probably in 1599, in the upper niche of a Renaissance-style architectural complex thereafter known as Viceroy's Arch. The arch represented the culmination of extensive renovation works that aimed to integrate the Quay's Gate (*Porta do Cais*) into the Fortress Palace (*Palácio da Fortaleza*), since 1554 the residence of the viceroys and governors of the *Estado*.¹² This endeavour was part and parcel of Vidigueira's strategy, designed to ensure the

collective remembrance of his ancestors' deeds, namely of those who had served as viceroys of India before him — his great-grandfather, Dom Vasco da Gama (g. 1524), and his grandfather's brother, Dom Estevão da Gama (g. 1540-2).

Vidigueira's ceremonial entry in Goa on 1 July 1597 was a special moment, as recounted by the chronicler Diogo do Couto, a figure close to the Gama family.¹³ The viceroy intended to take advantage of the chronological coincidence between the first centenary of the inaugural voyage of his ancestor to Calicut and his own governorship, thus linking the celebratory events to himself, the house of Vidigueira and its followers. The declared purpose, Couto remarks, was to correct "this city's carelessness" concerning the discoverer of India; hence the laudable decision taken by the Municipal Council (*Senado da Câmara*) of Goa to erect a "statue on the main gate of this city, so that all those entering it would remember how much all of us owe to him [Gama]." In addition, an inscription included in the Viceroys' Arch remembered Gama as "discoverer and conqueror of India."¹⁴

Private and public memories alike merged in this plan of projecting Gama's power and honour. But to deprive Dom Afonso de Albuquerque of the title of "conqueror of India" — he, who had been responsible for the bulk of Portuguese conquests in Asia during his years as governor of the *Estado* — was a notable provocation to the faction that continued to nurture his fame after his death in Goa in December 1515. The Albuquerque clan had since then been promoting a significant set of images and symbols in order to assure the conqueror of Goa a prominent place in the city's spatial layout. This programme started with an artful process of appropriation of the main sites of the old, pre-Portuguese city.¹⁵ Such was the case concerning the Grocers' Gate (*Porta dos Bacais*), which was part of the urban Islamic wall, serving as

the main entrance for those accessing the city from the inland areas of Tiswadi Island. Albuquerque himself ordered in 1514 the construction of a chapel devoted to Our Lady of the Hill (*Nossa Senhora da Serra*) in the very place where this gate was located, and it was in this same chapel that he was buried in the following year.¹⁶ The chapel thus became the city conqueror's main site of memory. It did not take long before this "monument" became the object of an intriguing cult at the crossroads of the sacred and the profane, fostered by Portuguese and natives alike.¹⁷

Albuquerque's public cult became particularly apparent with Viceroy Matias de Albuquerque (g. 1591-7). The nephew of one of Albuquerque's sons, he decided to recover the image of his famed ancestor through an extensive remodelling of the chapel. The works included the insertion of a precious retablo into the building, as well as the construction of a "sumptuous sepulchre."¹⁸ It is in a political context marked by acute contrasts and oppositions — well reflected in a contemporary libel in which a "miserable India" complains in the first person to King Philip II about the afflictions caused by the "tyrant" Albuquerque¹⁹ — that Matias de Albuquerque ventured to include a golden statue of the conqueror of Goa in the chapel's façade. The viceroy's celebratory gesture recalled earlier initiatives in other cities. For example, when he served as captain of Hormuz (1584-7) — a life-size painted stone statue of Dom Afonso de Albuquerque crafted in Goa and representing him with a sword in the right hand and an armillary sphere in the left was then placed in an external niche of the city's principal church (*Sé*) facing the main gate of the Portuguese fortress.²⁰

Some in Goa vocally opposed the ostensive association of the late governor with a chapel, and the local Inquisition was alerted to the danger of having the natives (either converted or not) "wondering whether it is [the statue of] some saint, and consequently

begin to revere and adore it.”²¹ This case recalls a later one, involving the Captain-General of Ceylon, Dom Constantino de Sá de Noronha (g. 1618-20). It seems that some of Sá de Noronha’s followers in the Municipal Council of Colombo decided to replace the representation of an angel in a niche of its public building with his statue. It did not take long, however, for King Philip III to order the removal of the statue of the captain-general and the reinstatement of the angel. Ironically enough, after his death in 1630 Sá de Noronha would enter the pantheon of local divinities with a temple (*pagode*) dedicated to his cult by the Sinhalese themselves.²² Albuquerque did not get that far in Goa, but it is not hard to imagine the complicity of the Gama clan in the anonymous denunciation of the potentially heretical statue of the city conqueror.

It is against this backdrop, with the political struggle feeding on the alternate implementation and contestation of images of eminent ancestors in the public space of Goa, that we ponder the erection a handful of years later of Gama’s statue in the Viceroy’s Arch. To recall, the statue introduced a political and social breach, as it literally broke the symbolic hegemony of the Albuquerque clan in the capital city of the *Estado* and simultaneously paved the way for escalation of violence. Vidigueira, for his part, was well aware of the tensions dividing the imperial elites of Goa. His arrival to the city had been accompanied not only by “the usual popular disorders against those who end their government,” but also by many half-spoken offenses coming from those who were aligned with Matias de Albuquerque.²³

Such hostilities had mounted during Vidigueira’s governorship and culminated at the moment of his departure, Christmas Day 1600, with the destruction of Gama’s statue. Insults by use of images imply the generalization of a visual, if not sensorial experience of politics, one powerful enough to bridge the gap between “low” and

“high,” between popular politics and elite politics. Satire and parody conjoined these two worlds, but paradoxically, a highly diffused offence often became a curtain of secrecy that permitted the protection of the culprits. It took more than eight years before the assault on Gama’s statue was investigated and adjudicated by the High Court (*Relação*) of Goa. Seemingly promoted by the newly arrived viceroy, Aires de Saldanha (g. 1600-5), a first inquiry conducted by the chief criminal judge (*ouvidor geral do crime*) right after the “insult” was anything but conclusive. In vain, the authorities assured confidentiality and anonymity to possible informers, going as far as “forbidding the punishment of any criminal offence that the person might have committed, as well as the punishment of exile, besides granting him two hundred *pardaos* from the Royal Treasury, which will be paid immediately.” If the informer was a captive, “he would be freed at once at the expense of his master.”²⁴

Threat of retaliation was salient, nurtured in the first place by the perpetrators themselves. The morning after the assault, an intimidating note was found close to the Viceroys’ Arch warning that “whoever speaks of, or discloses this affair, shall be killed.” A form of *omertà* prevailed, one that no witness or informer, either out of complicity or fear, ever broke.²⁵ Moreover, these scare tactics were certainly supported by viceroy Saldanha and also by André Furtado de Mendonça — who would later briefly serve as governor of the *Estado*, 1609 — both of whom were affiliated with the Albuquerque clique.²⁶ Thus we see that, even representing the Crown in the *Estado*, officiating viceroys did not always conceive of the offense to the person and public image of a particular viceroy as an offense to the king himself.

Things changed only between July and December 1609, significantly enough when the viceroy was the father-in-law of Vidigueira, Rui Lourenço de Távora (g.

1609-12). A lengthy inquest resulted in imprisonments and punishments, with Amaro da Rocha and another powerful figure, Dom Pedro Coutinho, held as mainly responsible. Not by coincidence, both these individuals belonged to the Albuquerque clan and, like many others, believed that “Afonso d’Albuquerque better deserve that place,” meaning that he was the one worthy of a statue on the Viceroys’ Arch.²⁷ The inquiry brought many other juicy details to light. Produced and recorded almost a full decade after the events, the extant testimonies still convey a sense of shock among both the Portuguese and the natives. Some *canarins* are said to have noted then that “the punishments that this city meanwhile had to bear find their roots in this event” — certainly a reference to the arrival of both the Dutch and the English to the Indian Ocean, which was still recent at the time. Quite scandalized, some “Moors and gentiles” remarked to a Portuguese knight “that they were surprised to see that this crime was left unpunished, since it had been committed against a person of such high quality and merit.”²⁸

Viceroy Távora kept Vidigueira (now President of the Council of India, in Lisbon) duly informed about the events in Portuguese India.²⁹ Viceroy Saldanha had replaced Gama’s statue not with one representing Albuquerque, but rather with a golden bust of St Catherine, the patroness of the city. This was an artful solution, because this saint was tightly linked to the memory of Albuquerque in Goa as he conquered the city on 25 November, St Catherine’s day. Seeking to avoid another war of stones and aiming to reconcile people and appease “past passions,” Távora charged the Municipal Council with the responsibility of finding a way to restore peace. On 24 June 1610 — the viceroy informed his son-in-law in a letter written from Goa later that year — a new statue of Gama

was put in its place with great festivities and the people's applause. Representatives of the Municipal Council were on the outer side of the Arch, while the natives and the squadron stood on the side of the Quay's Square (*Praça do Cais*), me included, together with all the horsemen. Some of those present there probably felt more resentment than joy but everyone pretended to be celebrating.³⁰

Távora's laconic description of the ceremony that took place at the Viceroy's Arch omits relevant aspects, like the cancellation of a public speech (*fala*) by Couto, in which the chronicler planned to state that the Gama's descendants should hold in perpetuity the viceregal "sceptre." Távora also failed to describe the intriguing layout of the monument: it included the new statue of Gama "in its original place and niche," while St Catherine's image had been moved to "a upper niche, higher than that of the said statue [Gama's], and located on the top of the Arch."³¹ The "discoverer of India" thus maintained a subaltern position vis-à-vis St Catherine, and, for that matter, Albuquerque.

The capital of the *Estado* was a site in permanent construction, with the extension of the urban fabric coinciding with a constant redefinition of the outlook and function of the noble areas of the city, namely the buildings that embodied imperial authority. Thus, inscribing statues of viceroys in the urban space of Goa became part of such process in the closing years of the sixteenth century. The available source material reflects recurrent polemics and tensions, not only related to the inclusion or erasure of these tridimensional depictions of viceroys in the imperial space, but also focused on the exact location — and therefore symbolic prominence — of such images. To decorate the façade of a church located in the main street of the city with the statue of a conqueror (like Albuquerque's golden one, placed in the façade of Our Lady of the Hill), or to mark one of the principal gates of the city with the statue of a discoverer

(like the painted marble one representing Gama, inserted in the Viceroy's Arch), entailed projects of memory perpetuation of certain individuals that concurrently contributed to strengthen the political authority of their clans. Naturally, such acts could be interpreted by rival factions as gestures of open provocation; Albuquerque's partisans were accused of trying to make him a saint, while others saw the celebratory programme of the centenary of Gama's voyage to India as an attempt to expel the conqueror from his own city. A long story of political use of visual insults was just beginning.

Hanged Effigies

A few days before the departure of Vidigueira from Goa in 1600, unknown persons had thrown filth (*immundicias*) at his great-grandfather's statue. However, an offense directed at the viceroy in broad daylight placed the veiled conflict at the upper level of the "art of insult." On the very day of his return to Portugal, Vidigueira managed to escape a ploy prepared by Dom Pedro Coutinho, "who was in middle of the river accompanied by other people waiting to confront him as he embarked for the realm; but this came to no effect since he [Vidigueira] embarked at a different, unexpected moment." In any case, once reaching the ship that would take him to Lisbon, Vidigueira crossed paths with a group of forty armed men who were then calmly leaving the *nau*. They seemed to be provocatively relaxed, after having left a "statue" of the viceroy — recognizable by his face and dress — hanged on the tip of one of the ship's spar. Vidigueira tossed the effigy into the sea, taking his leave of Goa a rather angry man. "Never again, never again India" (*não mais, não mais Índia*), he might have said then, thus evoking a famed line of Luís de Camões's *Lusiads* (canto X, 145, 1). Vidigueira

would after all return to Goa in 1622 in order to rule over Portuguese Asia for a second time. History, however, repeated itself shortly prior to his definitive voyage to Portugal six years later, in 1628: he was imprisoned in Goa and forced to face humiliations that certainly would have brought to mind the demeaning episode three decades prior.³²

The hanged effigy of Vidigueira represented a subversion that was somehow intended to respond to the “imposition” of Gama’s statue in the Viceroys’ Arch. What is more, Vidigueira’s symbolic death represented a severe attack on the figure of the viceroy itself; the gesture can therefore be read as a deadly menace to its institutional character. Such a strike was launched even more definitely a decade later, when “one day a statue hanged on a mast was found at dawn in the large square (*Terreiro de Goa*), right in front of the Palace (*Paços*), with a label that read: *Ruy Lourenço hanged in statue.*” The target was now Viceroy Távora. This particular “contempt” (*desacato*) — promoted on an open and highly frequented space of the city, located between the Fortress Palace and the Mandovi River — was directed at the ruling official representative of the king, and not to a departing viceroy. Once informed of “such a scandalous crime,” Philip III reacted harshly and ordered those found guilty to be arrested and punished. The leaders (*cabeças*) were meanwhile identified, but they managed to escape from the city.³³

The abiding rivalry amongst the imperial elites again resulted in public insult against the Gama clan. It was common practice at the time to execute absent convicts in effigy.³⁴ One can thus imagine the reaction of the Goa residents, including the indigenous population — who were used to watching such a ritual at the end of the *autos-de-fé* against those condemned by the local Inquisition as fugitive heretics — to the image of the current viceroy being punished in precisely this way.³⁵

Távora was a predictable target, being the father-in-law of Vidigueira. However, if the antagonism among families and factions anchored in the contested memories of Albuquerque and Gama polarized the clashes that took place in Goa at the turn of the seventeenth century, the execution of viceroys in effigy became almost routine in the following decades. The dominant strategy in similar conflicts was to diminish eminent political adversaries — mostly viceroys still in charge or about to finish their terms — by “clandestinely” displaying their effigies and other mock representations in the city. These ephemeral statues of living people were meant to shock the population for one morning, their authors being well aware that such defamatory objects would soon be removed and destroyed. In the intriguing track from the presumed eternity of stone statues to the transient character of disposable effigies, one can trace the rise and consolidation of a political routine anchored in the “art of insult.” In fact, the grave and exceptional nature of the destruction of Gama’s statue gradually gave way to somewhat normal, recurrent depictions of viceroys dominated by satire and defamation. The different factions and individuals at play learned to fight their wars by spreading rumours, crafting ironies and performing tricks directed at particular individuals.

Simulated killings acquired a somewhat “softer” satirical dimension, exposing the wrongdoings of successive viceroys to public knowledge and parody. Here Goa was emulating established European political practices in the period, namely the infamous papers glued to the Pasquino and the Gobbo di Rialto in Italy.³⁶ Located at the heart of the cities of Rome and Venice, respectively, these statues were used to circulate anonymous rumours and accusations that exposed high politics to the streets. To all appearances a space for free speech, the two statues often conveyed messages that stemmed from conflicts among local elites. Not surprisingly, the Pasquino was well-

known in Portuguese India; consider the story of Pero Fernandes, a Galician resident of Diu who became a sort of “Pasquino of Rome” in the local Portuguese fortress after around 1546. A “free-speaking man,” he would openly take the word every morning on a rooftop and, “like a Moor on top of a Minaret,” went on either calling the officers to work or revealing who was sleeping with whom in the city. Some nobles went as far as writing “to the King [John III, r. 1521-57], signing as Pero Fernandes, in order to say whatever they wanted him [the king] to know about the government of Portugal and that of India”.³⁷ Be that as it may, it is worth noting that a long tradition of “talking statues” started in Renaissance Rome with the recovery of a rather old and dilapidated statue, while the equivalents of Goa derived from a fairly recent one carved out of marble (Gama’s statue), its mutilation representing savage hostility.³⁸

A notable case of execution of a viceroy in effigy occurred a quarter century after Távora’s. On the morning of 12 October 1635, the first residents of the city to pass through the Mandovim Plaza saw a statue representing Dom Miguel de Noronha, fourth count of Linhares and viceroy of the *Estado* since 1629. Recalling the two previous known cases, the statue had been hanged in the gallows, and besides exhibiting the name of the victim, tied around his waist was a distaff (*roca*) listing twenty-eight grievances and accusations against the viceroy.³⁹ Accused of being a Jew and the son of a common street woman vendor (*tendeira*) from Lisbon, Linhares was held responsible for having taken disastrous political and military decisions and made poor appointments harming the defence and reputation of Portuguese Asia. In addition, the Viceroy was charged with especially endorsing Jews and Indian merchants, being corrupt and having participated in private business dealings against the best interests of Goa and the *Estado*. In a clear mockery of the Inquisition’s *autos-da-fé*, the libel closed with a harsh

sentence, which was extended to some of the viceroy's friends and presumed accomplices: "All things considered...we order the defendant Dom Miguel de Noronha's death by hanging; his body should be burnt as a Jew, also for having favoured all those belonging to this nation."⁴⁰

To be labelled a Jew was a familiar accusation in any early modern Iberian city, moulded as their communities were by heavy anti-Jewish sentiments, even more after the late-fifteenth-century expulsions and forced baptisms. The intriguing presence of the distaff, however, calls for a more refined reading. In an episode strikingly reminiscent of Linhares's almost six decades earlier and thousands of miles away, the "statue" of a prominent Spanish resident of Tecamachalco (eighty miles southeast of Mexico City) — one Hernando Rubio Naranjo — was nailed to the door of the church of the local Franciscan monastery. The Mexican Inquisition stepped in heavily to the Tecamachalco case, the personal insult to Rubio Naranjo further being understood as an outrageous appropriation of the Inquisition's institutional symbols and authority. The Inquisition of Goa did not intervene in the viceroy's case, but Rubio Naranjo's and Linhares's likenesses had many elements in common, most prominently a particular adornment: the distaff. Meaning and purpose were obvious in Tecamachalco, 1578, as they were in Goa, 1635: in the early modern Iberian world, but also in other European societies of the time, the distaff was a gendered symbol which underlined the effeminate character of those using it. Linhares was thus exposed as a weakling.⁴¹

The viceroy was now at the end of his long six-year tenure in the *Estado* and would return to Portugal two months after this episode.⁴² He had always been a controversial figure; anonymous satirical writings, namely a fictional letter authored by "a citizen of Goa to another of Lisbon" and dated 29 January 1636, were penned in his

reproach.⁴³ But the pictorial presentation of outrage displayed three months earlier, accompanied by sharply worded charges, overshadows all other attacks. Dominating the public space, the violent image of a hanged viceroy must have touched all who saw it but the sources do not record the popular responses the statue provoked. We should note here that ephemeral representations of eminent individuals could be used as an antidote against offences sometimes. Such was the case of Florence at the end of the fifteenth century, during the so-called *Congiura dei Pazzi*. Having just barely escaped death in April 1478 in the sequence of events that would claim the life of his brother Giuliano de Piero de' Medici in the city cathedral, Lorenzo the Magnificent would not, however, disappear from public affairs. Wounded and bloody, he showed himself to the people from the *varanda* of Palazzo Medici that same day. Perhaps more important than Lorenzo's immediate public appearance were the two life-size wax votive effigies that his friends and family ordered to be made and placed in two churches in Florence. One of the effigies was clothed in the very garments that Lorenzo was wearing at the moment of the assassination attempt, as though to signal his "resurrection."⁴⁴

A somewhat similar act of reparation occurred in the aftermath of the execution of Viceroy Linhares's effigy. The incident provoked passionate reactions in the city and would soon be discussed in the Municipal Council, in a large people's assembly (*junta do povo*), which demanded a response to that "wretched occurrence" by placing "multiple statues of the viceroy in safe locations," a decision Linhares endorsed.⁴⁵ Probably influenced by the inflamed reaction of the Municipal Council, the tribunal of the High Court reacted in an even more exaggerated manner. The six judges who analyzed the crime condemned the "great effrontery" made against Linhares — "him currently being our prince," they noted. The identification of the figure of the viceroy

with that of the prince resembles the way in which Spanish viceroys were addressed in New Spain and their authority portrayed as “sovereign or supreme ruler of the land.”⁴⁶ But the High Court went even further and concluded that “in order to praise and remember Linhares, all the people under his governorship should not only be committed to erect him large and honoured statues, but they should also have them sculpted on their chests.”

The image of Linhares’s form engraved on the heart of each and every inhabitant of Goa is highly suggestive, demonstrating the strength of graphic insults and the reactions they provoked. The response to the hanged effigy “embellished” with written offenses in glued scraps of paper, and ultimately, the reparation of one’s reputation were equally conceived as a visual action. Such acts of justice called for the full participation of the people, akin to the case of the *pitture infamanti*, the Italian bi-dimensional representations placed on the walls of public buildings depicting the faces of criminals and sketching their crimes.⁴⁷ In the case of Linhares, a decision was made to erect a “honourable statue” in the very place of the “shameful” one. Such reparation was shelved, however, with the arrival of the new viceroy: “these arrivals usually change everything,” the Portuguese chronicler Manuel de Faria e Sousa lamented.⁴⁸ In fact, the multiplication of ephemeral statues of Linhares throughout the city, or at least the placement of a permanent statue, did not occur until the end of 1635, and the opportunity was thus lost.

The new viceroy, Pero da Silva (g. 1635-9), explained to Philip IV in March of the following year his opposition to the dissemination of such “trophy” in Goa. What the Municipal Council had determined, Silva remarked, was “to put an honorable statue in the very same place where the hanged statue was found and before it a stone pyramid

where the deeds of the Count would be inscribed.” An offending statue resulted in the placement of “trophies” meant to defend the reputation of the individual under attack, but those who had motivated the original “contempt” would certainly not wait long to respond in kind, either destroying those “trophies” or defacing them with “ignominious words.” It would become necessary to position guards to stand watch over these monuments day and night, and this would “scandalize” the city, Silva argued. Additionally, we have the important information that the Municipal Council planned to erect a stone pyramid (i.e., an obelisk) facing Linhares’s statue. Silva refers here to an object whose meaning and purpose were not unknown to officials of the city of Goa. Obelisks, or pyramids — built of wood and often painted with emblems — were widely used during public ceremonies and festivals in Renaissance Europe along with triumphal arches and statues. What the aldermen of Goa perhaps did not know is that obelisks had since the end of the sixteenth century become instruments of satire in Europe, often used “to vilify rather than exalt.”⁴⁹ The pyramid representing the feats of Linhares risked similar insult. At the very least, the defenders of the obelisk honouring Linhares should have been well aware of what had happened to the statue of Gama thirty years prior.

Linhares’s effigy was not the first one, and it would not be the last. The dawn of a morning in September 1641 in Goa revealed another statue of a hanged viceroy. Night was a time of potential sedition, “dis-government” and disorder, in which discipline, control and authority are especially difficult to safeguard.⁵⁰ No wonder that in two of the three preceding cases, namely those of Távora and Linhares, the effigies were anonymously placed during the night or early morning in central squares of Goa. The target this time was Dom João da Silva Telo de Meneses, count of Aveiras, who served

as viceroy of the *Estado* since the previous year (g. 1640-5). Like Távora, Aveiras was at the height of his authority as viceroy, but he chose not to react — “the count did not care about this matter when the city raised the issue.” The nonchalance was likely related to a desire to assuage the already tense and at times tumultuous atmosphere that befell various cities of the Portuguese Empire as John IV of Braganza was acknowledged as king of Portugal in the aftermath of the “Restoration,” the recovery of independence from Spain.⁵¹ Certainly, we know that mock effigies were on frequent display in Goa, city officials lamenting the “lack of punishment of those who had done this on other occasions.”⁵²

The last hanged statue we know of is that of viceroy Dom Filipe de Mascarenhas (g. 1645-51), the successor to Aveiras. On 26 February 1648, nearly at the mid-point of his six-year term, one effigy representing Mascarenhas “dawned” (*amanheceu uma estátua*) in the very same place of Linhares’s statue: the Mandovim Plaza. Like the statue of Linhares, the representation of Mascarenhas was accompanied by written accusations. Attached to the effigy was “a label in the form of a public cry [*pregão*] in name of His Majesty [John IV], stating that the king ordered Dom Phelippe Mascarenhas, his viceroy of this *Estado*, to be hanged, with rather exorbitant words both against his person as well as against the office of viceroy itself.”⁵³ This case was apparently more serious than any other: not only was the libel explicitly addressed “against the office” of viceroy, but it also suggested that Mascarenhas should be killed and replaced.⁵⁴

Lambasting political opponents by hanging viceroys in effigy — often under cover of night in a city plaza — had become a rather frequent occurrence in seventeenth-century Goa. To a certain extent, this practice conveyed a sense of a

carnavalesque world in which the political order was turned upside down. It might also be construed as a sort of subversion of the typical early modern European public events, particularly the religious and civic festivals animating Iberian cities and their urban “offspring” across continents.⁵⁵ Streets and squares were filled on these occasions with ephemeral art forms, like triumphal arches and fireworks displays. “Disposable” statues were very much present in viceregal entries, and Goa provides telling examples in this respect, namely a wooden tridimensional representation of Dom João de Castro. This rare object was probably crafted with the celebrations of the triumph of Diu of 1546 in mind, a festival that took place the following year in the capital city of the *Estado*.⁵⁶ However, the cases discussed in the previous pages show the ambivalent power of these representations and draw attention to the tight relationship between these urban public rituals and intriguing mechanisms of political offense.

Considering the uncertainty felt in the capital of the Portuguese Asia starting from the late sixteenth century — related to the strong military pressure exerted by other European powers and sizeable losses they inflicted to the *Estado* — we can sense some dissolution of the body politic in imperial Goa, if not the erosion of the office of viceroy itself. One might wonder if this, in fact, signalled that the Portuguese overseas city had its share in the so-called crisis of the seventeenth-century, which was acutely experienced in the Iberian Peninsula and Spanish America.⁵⁷ Art (whether ephemeral or not) could constitute a powerful device of political insubordination and popular rebellion.

Dances with Portraits

We now move backwards in time, switching from statues and effigies to portraits. On the first day of 1610, a few months after his arrival to India, Viceroy Rui Lourenço de Távora penned a letter to his son-in-law, Dom Francisco da Gama, Count of Vidigueira, who was then living in Lisbon. Adopting a somewhat familiar tone, Távora digresses about the quality of the paintings in Goa depicting the viceroys of the *Estado*. They were displayed in the so-called Viceroys' Gallery (*Galeria dos vice-reis*), situated in the Royal Hall (*Sala real*) of the Fortress Palace. Távora considered the thirty-seven portraits hung there to be of poor quality and his growing concern was with the portrait that would one day depict him in the same gallery upon his return to Portugal. They all looked to be suffering from hernia (*potrosos*), he disappointedly noted to Vidigueira. To avoid being just one more *potroso* in the gallery, Távora solicited his son-in-law to commission a painter in Lisbon so that a copy of a good-quality portrait of him could be dispatched to Goa as soon as possible. Initially, Távora thought that his son-in-law's portrait in the gallery was good, but later, in a post-script to the letter, he reconsidered: "your portrait is also not very natural. Please send me another one, in the same manner as mine, and I will put it in the right place."⁵⁸

We do not know whether or not Vidigueira dispatched in a timely manner the two portraits from Lisbon, if they arrived in good condition to Goa, or even if Távora had the chance to place both in the Viceroys' Gallery. However, the present case constitutes a telling example of the intersection of the official and the personal, the institutional and the familial, and the king's representative and the private noble. It is an exchange of personal correspondence between relations belonging to two important Portuguese families. Like so many other letter-exchanges in this period in Europe, including Iberia, we deal here with a noble conversation in written form around private

portraits.⁵⁹ As we shall see, private portraits that became official ones acquired different meanings and greater importance.

Our anecdote tells us a great deal about the uses of portraits in Goa in this period. As noted above, the interplay of private and public — the “body” of the viceroy intersecting the “body” of the relative — is clearly at stake.⁶⁰ Portraits were used to overcome absence and negotiate distance between people and institutions. They were effective tools for the nurture of both political authority and personal bonds across a vast space — from Portugal to India and back, with two oceans in between. Concurrently, portraits also allowed one to travel backwards in time; attendees of ceremonies in the royal hall of the viceregal palace could always “see” the first viceroy of the *Estado*, appointed as early as 1505.

But portraits could also be quite dangerous in the capital of the *Estado*. Apparently, and unlike the statues and effigies at hand, there are no instances of mutilated portraits of viceroys in Goa. There is no known local equivalent to what happened in Naples in 1647 to a portrait of Diomedes Carafa, the Duke of Maddaloni, disfigured and then dragged on to the Market Square (*Piazza del Mercato*) and exposed like an executed effigy bearing the following inscription: “This is the duke of Matalon, traitor of the most loyal people.”⁶¹ Notwithstanding the absence of similar cases, paintings depicting viceroys of the *Estado* could easily become sharp-edged instruments of different wars (political, institutional, familial and personal) fought in Goa in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The privileged arenas of such wars were somewhat closed, institutional spaces, even if such premises could open up and become permeable to popular politics. The two main spaces of contention were the Fortress Palace and the building of the Municipal Council.⁶²

Modelled on significant Italian precedents, a gallery of the viceroys of India was created in the mid-sixteenth century, under the governorship of Dom João de Castro. It included life-size portraits of all twelve viceroys and governors of the *Estado* painted by a native artist under the supervision of the Portuguese chronicler Gaspar Correia, who claimed to have met all twelve.⁶³ A half-public, half-private enterprise (there is no clear divide at the moment of its conception), the gallery was geared as a place of celebration, remembrance, and harmony. Seemingly, Viceroy Matias de Albuquerque “ordered the portraits of all his predecessors to be copied” and created a similar gallery in his Lisbon palace upon return to Portugal in 1597, a place “where all the Portuguese nobility could come to identify and venerate the memory of those who brought so much glory to their families.”⁶⁴

The gallery Castro had created in Goa (but perhaps also its replica established in Lisbon by Matias de Albuquerque, if it ever existed) was a space of power — a place of memory for Portuguese Asia, but equally one of affirmation and competition of illustrious men, their families and supporters. Consequently, it was as much a locus of conflict as the Mandovim gallows or the Viceroys’ Arch. While the people represented in the gallery stood still on the walls, unable to offend or undermine each other, both former and deceased viceroys could “move,” or were moved, “dancing” from wall to wall, or from wall to oblivion. Viceregal portraits truly had a life of their own in Goa. Portraits, like statues and effigies, constituted powerful devices for personal and political maneuvering.

We shall now briefly recapitulate a year-long discussion that took place in the middle of the seventeenth century between Goa and Lisbon around one particular portrait in this gallery. In 9 September 1652, Dom Vasco de Mascarenhas, count of

Óbidos, had not yet formally entered the city of Goa as viceroy (g. 1652-3). Nonetheless, he rushed to order the removal of the portrait of Francisco de Mello de Castro, António de Sousa Coutinho, and Fray Francisco dos Mártires, archbishop of Goa, from the Royal Hall of the Fortress Palace and its subsequent storage in Mello de Castro's house until a royal decision was reached.⁶⁵ The painting consisted of a single panel representing the three members of the Council who had held the government of India in 1651-2, between the death of Dom Filipe de Mascarenhas and the arrival of Óbidos. The latter certainly thought that, with regards to status and authority, a council did not equate a viceroy; hence his abrupt gesture.

"In order to avoid bigger problems," one of the three members of the Council — Mello de Castro — obeyed the order of the Viceroy and removed the painting from the gallery. However, the very next day he sent a note to Óbidos, demolishing the viceroy's arguments and stating pointedly that the king would eventually "solve this problem as deemed convenient."⁶⁶ The complaint filed by the two surviving members of the Council — Archbishop Mártires meanwhile died, it was said, as a result of the offence itself — was sent to Portugal in January 1653 and the decision taken by Óbidos was thoroughly discussed in the Overseas Council (*Conselho Ultramarino*).

The Lisbon debate is quite compelling. The complexity of the topic led the Overseas Council to recommend to the king, on 16 March 1654, that he further consult with the State Council (*Conselho do Estado*). Apparently interested in expediting the matter, John IV disregarded the suggestion; five days later, he decided in favour of Mello de Castro and Sousa Coutinho, thus explicitly ordering the triptych to be placed "in its original place."⁶⁷ Ironically, Óbidos was no longer in Goa when these royal instructions arrived to the capital of the *Estado*. His short governorship was never

consensual, and he was ultimately deposed in 1653.⁶⁸ Significantly, his lack of empathy with the people of Goa is attributed by a contemporary observer to the Count's very first decision upon disembarking in the city: the removal of the portrait of his predecessors from the Viceroys' Gallery.⁶⁹

This was far from the first case of a portrait being “rudely” removed from and later restored to the Viceroys' Gallery. Consider the one depicting Vidigueira, with which we opened this section of the article. When his father-in-law, Távora, entertained the idea of replacing it for a better-quality painting in 1610 the portrait was roughly a decade old, and yet it had already undergone some tumultuous events related to the Albuquerque-Gama clan dispute. Once Vidigueira travelled back to Lisbon in 1600, his successor Saldanha took his portrait out of the gallery, only to be put back again in its place by an alderman (*vereador*) called Baltasar Rodrigues d'Alvellos (or d'Arvellos), who was obviously aligned with the Gama family.⁷⁰

The debate that materialized in the Overseas Council in 1653-4 regarding the “extremely serious matter” of the councillors' portrait anchored itself in precedents that were to be contrasted with Óbidos's attitude. Vidigueira's was not among the cases then broached. But we do learn that upon arriving at the Fortress Palace in December 1635, Viceroy Pero da Silva found the portrait of his predecessor, Linhares, out of its natural order. It was placed rather at the feet of the portrait of Dom Afonso de Noronha, who had served as viceroy between 1550 and 1554. The latter was Linhares's great-grandfather, and Linhares certainly would have felt that his visual representation as viceroy of India would be better situated next to his family lineage than “stuck” between Vidigueira and Silva. Silva ordered that the portrait of his predecessor be

moved to its correct position, simultaneously annulling Linhares's political and family statement.

Nevertheless, the portrait of Linhares was destined not to find rest. When Mascarenhas entered the Fortress Palace as viceroy in 1645, the gallery was on his mind. It was public knowledge that Linhares had decided to remain in Madrid after the Restoration of 1640, declaring obedience to Philip IV and thus not recognizing John IV as legitimate monarch.⁷¹ The portrait of a traitor was now hung among those of dozens of loyal viceroys in the gallery and, "following the instructions he [Mascarenhas] had received from His Majesty, it was not convenient to keep the count's portrait in that room." We do not know whether Mascarenhas was in fact under royal orders to remove the portrait of Linhares, but his actions was at any rate mild: "he did not go farer than to turn the portrait to the wall, thus signifying that he was actually removing it and that the correct portrait order should be respected."⁷² Mascarenhas's discretion likely reflects his awareness of the implications of the honour of any viceroy of the *Estado*. In this arena, the viceroy or "the king's living image," to borrow Alejandro Cañeque's apt expression.⁷³ Mascarenhas, in fact, made a highly astute political move: he simply made it impossible to see the face of one who, in the context of the new "Restored Portugal" (*Portugal Restaurado*), did not deserve residence in the gallery.

This particular incident leads us to the second site of visual dispute in the capital of the *Estado*: the grounds of the Municipal Council (*Casas da Câmara*). The building was then home to portraits of all the Portuguese monarchs. A few paintings depicting exceptionally prominent viceroys of the *Estado* (defining who was exceptional was a challenge and often led to controversy and conflict) were also on display in the Municipal Council of Goa. Dom Afonso de Albuquerque was the first to have his

portrait in the *Câmara* around 1520, ten years after he had conquered the city.⁷⁴ Dom João de Castro's portrait followed, in the wake of the so-called triumph of Diu of 1546⁷⁵. The third was that of Dom Luís de Ataíde, whose deeds in Asia during his first term as viceroy (1568-71) were likewise celebrated the classical way and met some European impact.⁷⁶ At the close of the sixteenth century, Dom Vasco da Gama was the only apparently undisputed (but in reality violently contested) figure not to have his portrait on the walls of the Municipal Council. What was considered by many to be an injustice was duly corrected in 1597, precisely during the celebrations of the first centenary of the arrival of the Portuguese to India. After extensive renovation works in the building, a portrait of Gama — painted after the one that hung in the Viceroys' Gallery since the mid-century — was unveiled in the Municipal Council on Christmas Day 1597, with all prominent residents of the city in attendance. Vidigueira sat on a velvet chair and listened to an intriguing oration by the chronicler Couto.⁷⁷

Notwithstanding such accolades, the favourable environment towards the deeds of Gama and his family's glory would not last long in the capital of the *Estado*. As we have seen earlier, in 1600 Vidigueira returned to Lisbon under massive opprobrium and was succeeded by Saldanha, a figure affiliated with the Albuquerque clan. The Municipal Council, and specifically the viceregal portraits displayed on its walls, was a locus of controversy. Gama's portrait, placed in 1597 to the right of the building's new noble wall and facing Albuquerque's portrait (now relegated to a subaltern place), had to be removed from its original position. In fact, Albuquerque's relatives complained bitterly about this arrangement, arguing that the room's most prominent wall ought to be reserved for the image of their ancestor "as conqueror of that city." A compromise was then struck in which both portraits were faced toward the building's entrance, with

that of Albuquerque on the right side and Gama's on the left one, while Castro's and Ataíde's portraits were displayed on the opposite, "darker" wall.⁷⁸ Couto's terse account encapsulated an impassioned exchange of arguments and documents between the two parties. Viceroy Saldanha issued a decree (*alvará*) in August 1602 presumably supported by a royal order to return Albuquerque's portrait to its original, privileged position in the Municipal Council. The viceroy consequently determined that the portrait of the city's conqueror should be placed between the Council's board (*mesa da vereação*) and an image of St Catherine. But Gama's coterie did not take long to fight back through complaints filed by Dom Luís da Gama (Vidigueira's brother and former captain of Hormuz) and Dom Álvaro de Meneses (former captain of Goa). Doubting the veracity of the alleged king's orders, they asked to see "the copy of the [royal] instruction," to have it copied to the register (*livro dos acordos*) and thus have it available in the municipal records. They further argued that such decisions did not depend on the viceroy's discretion but rather on the city's authority, thus pushing for a broad consultation of the people of Goa (*chamamento de povo*).⁷⁹

Much more than the almost-secluded Viceroys' Gallery, the "open doors" of the Municipal Council — with its recurrent calls for popular decisions regarding the inclusion or the exclusion of sensitive portraits — fostered an intriguing fusion of elite politics and crowd action. Almost half a century later another such heated moment would shake the walls of the Municipal Council. In November 1645 city officials wrote to John IV, recalling that portraits of the kings of Portugal were exhibited inside the building and requesting permission to "erase" (*apagar*) those representing the "Phillips from Castile who were intruders in the government of Portugal." The Overseas Council agreed to this proposal in October of the following year and recommended that John

IV's portrait be placed directly after the one representing King Henry (r. 1578-80), "who is our last king and lord."⁸⁰

The Restoration wars between Portugal and Spain (1640–68) were fought with *papeles*, but images were no less important.⁸¹ On this same occasion, the Municipal Council of Goa asked Lisbon for instructions concerning the portraits of Linhares and Aveiras that were also exhibited in the city hall at the time. The letter further added that the portraits of these men had recently joined those of eminent figures from the previous century: Albuquerque, Gama, Castro and Ataíde. These four "were put here due to their fame, and for having performed heroic deeds, and there is mention to their particular services," indicating that below each of these images was written the heroic acts of each individual. But Linhares and Aveiras embodied a rather different reality, since they "came during the times of the Castilian king." Many Portuguese viceroys in fact came during the times of Castilian kings. Of these, only Linhares and Aveiras had portraits in the Municipal Council, without a clear justification. The former since 1640 was considered a traitor in Portugal, while the latter, being the last viceroy to be appointed by a Castilian king, apparently hesitated to recognize John IV as legitimate monarch.⁸²

Be that as it may, the Overseas Council noted that the appropriate venue for the viceroys' portraits "is the governors' room [i.e., the Viceroys' Gallery], while the Municipal Council should not be home to more than those who are chosen by the people, considering their distinguished deeds; those who do not fit this description shall be removed."⁸³ The images of the four sixteenth-century viceroys (one of them, Albuquerque, being governor and not viceroy) remained untouched while there are no doubts whatsoever with regard to the fate of Linhares's portrait: in 1647, when the city officials wrote again to the king of Portugal, it was no longer there.

The fate of Aveiras's portrait was much more difficult to decide. To ascertain the people's will (*o que o povo quiser*), as recommended from Lisbon by the Overseas Council, implied convening an enlarged popular assembly. Consequently, a "people's assembly" (*junta do povo*) met in December 1647 but the meeting turned out to be rather tense. In fact, street and popular politics almost determined a violent outcome: "what was lacking among the people was union and harmony, necessary to decide the right thing to do; bitter words were said, some people were imprisoned, and the risk of murder and mayhem among the knights (*fidalgos*) was real." There were riots, the result of the voting was inconclusive, and the painting of Aveiras would be left hanging on the walls of the Municipal Council, with the explicit recommendation from Lisbon that, given the "variation in the people's vote," one should not "innovate."⁸⁴

Conclusion

The episodes discussed in the previous pages are inseparable from a longer series of controversies and insults that moulded the life of imperial Goa in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Whether they constituted a real challenge to the official authority or simply a violent act of visual satire, the most striking cases correspond to those that left a stronger imprint in the Portuguese sources. Mostly stemming from judicial litigation, institutional alarm and individual anxiety, the surviving paper trail allows us to grasp the nature of the sentiments prompted by such events as well as to gauge their contemporary intensity. A full sense of the cases explored in this article requires the consideration of important phenomena like the symbolic power of images and its subversion; the effects of distance–proximity with regards to visual representation; the intersection of insult and satire; the relationship between public and private spaces

(which additionally calls for a reflection on how closed were the institutional spaces of the city of Goa) in the context of a global history of the early modern street⁸⁵; the importance of rumour and concealment; and the role of popular — including indigenous — reactions to public acts of political iconoclasm.

The mutilation of the statue of a viceroy, the hanging of his mock effigy on a square, and the (re)moval of his portrait from a wall sent disparate messages, yet there was common ground among them. All were fragments of the political communication in Portuguese Goa, one in which the viceroy is at the centre, invariably creating expectations and catalysing conflicts. The artistic representation and exhibition of the person of the viceroy constituted then an ambiguous gesture, since it potentially merged the collective purpose of imperial glorification with the construction of an individual, person-oriented narrative. The latter referred to one particular viceroy, but not to all his predecessors, nor even necessarily to the figure of the viceroy itself.

Somewhat ironically, our efforts to understand the role of visibility vis-à-vis the complex landscape of political communication in early modern Goa are undermined by the fact that the remaining traces of such “visual tensions” are mostly written records. True, the viceregal portraits did come to us, albeit repainted and altered time and again.⁸⁶ But coeval images of their frequent “dances” on the walls of the Fortress Palace’s Royal Hall are not available, while the (equally dancing) original portraits hung on the walls of the Municipal Council building simply disappeared. Also, visual representations of hanged statues did not survive (if such ever existed), just as we know almost nothing about their material composition. They surely were life-size effigies, but we do not know whether they were constructed of wood, wax, straw, or a blend of various materials. They were clothed, and it was written at the time that the face of Dom

Filipe de Mascarenhas's effigy was painted with charcoal. In any case, they were rather imperfect, rough representations, which probably dramatized their satirical purpose.

The interplay of visual and written languages constitutes another element common to these effigies. As other "statues," the one representing Linhares included "scandalous epitaphs" and "very unconscionable words," but the defamatory writings were not limited to those pasted onto the statue. There is reference to "other similar papers that can be found in different parts of the city," while Faria e Sousa notes that "scandalous papers on the most central corners" appeared the next day, with "the writings on the walls and the statue up in the air."⁸⁷ The spaces of satire and textual violence were, accordingly, much broader than those of visual violence, which was limited to a statue in one plaza. In any case, they probably complemented each other.

The statues, as well as the writings stuck to them, evoke the mechanisms of insult and satire dominating Europe and beyond in this period. In Guangdong Province, (Southern China), rather distant from Rome and even from Goa, the Italian Jesuit missionary Matteo Ricci saw the Portuguese being visually and acerbically parodied in the market place through Chinese painted posters.⁸⁸ The Iberian World was fertile ground for manifestations of similar kind.⁸⁹ Anonymous and defamatory papers were common in different parts of the Portuguese Empire, despite the severe punishment determined by the *Ordenações Filipinas* (1603) against the authors of "written verses and other satirical letters."⁹⁰ But what impresses one most in the cases of visual insult studied in this article is their extreme iconoclastic violence at a symbolic level that was never reached — to our knowledge — in the Iberian Peninsula against the king. Did overseas distance contribute to the institutional downsizing, and factional appropriation, of the office of viceroy? Whatever the answer, those holding the position became

recurring targets of political violence or public mockery, and these passionate spectacles were sometimes perceived in Lisbon as acts of *lèse-majesté*; such was the case of Dom Filipe de Mascarenhas's effigy.

If the dance of the viceregal portraits in the Fortress Palace's Royal Hall or on the walls of the Municipal Council building addressed first and foremost the Portuguese settlers, the destruction of statues or the sudden appearance of satirical effigies mobilised further reactions. Here high intersected with low, and parlour politics found legitimacy, in a way, in popular politics not dissimilarly from Europe. The acts of visual insult discussed in this article were ordered by members of rival factions struggling for power, but we should note that in the Portuguese tropics the skilful use of public space by the anonymous authors of the attacks against several viceroys also aimed at reaching a broader, native audience. This raises an important question about the variety of visual literacies that engaged with the political communication of the Portuguese imperial elites. At least two of the effigies were placed in the gallows of the Mandovim Plaza, also called the Bazaar Plaza. Situated in a highly trafficked sector of Goa, it was primarily frequented by non-European "poor people," "mostly natives from the Island, Christians and Gentiles, a considerable number of slaves of all sorts, men and women," as a Spanish ambassador noted in the early seventeenth century.⁹¹

Thus, we have a solid indicator that the culprit behind the offensive statues could belittle the image of these viceroys and perhaps the office of the viceroy itself in relation to the indigenous population of Goa. Be they real or fictional, vituperative comments by natives peppered the several episodes at stake, starting with the mutilation of Gama's statue in 1601, which caused an intense debate among the *canarins*. Along these lines, it is understandable that, when condemning those responsible for Aveiras's

mock effigy, the city officials stressed that “one should be respectful since we are presently very much pressed (*abarbados*) by the neighbouring kings.”⁹²

The authors of the defamatory acts discussed in this article might have deliberately chosen to denigrate their adversaries in the eyes of the native inhabitants of Goa. Yet, their hostile pictorial messages yielded an ironic outcome since the attacks against the persons who successively represented the Portuguese king in Asia turned out to provoke the empire’s “loss of face” vis-à-vis the subjects who those same viceroys were expected to govern as well as the enemies they were supposed to fight.

¹ See Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation*; Zanker, *The Power of Images* (for statues); Lee, “Building Cultural Authority.”

² In his *Wooden Eyes*, Ginzburg offers pathbreaking ideas on the question of distance and pays particular attention to imagery and likenesses.

³ Freedberg, *The Power of Images*.

⁴ Johnson, “Renegotiating Dissonant Heritage.”

⁵ See Santos, ‘*Goa é a chave de toda a Índia*’; and Xavier, *A invenção de Goa*.

⁶ Burke, “The Art of Insult.”

⁷ There is abundant literature on this matter. See Eire, *War Against the Idols*; Aston, *England’s Iconoclasts*; Michalski, *The Reformation and the Visual Arts*; Crew, *Calvinist Preaching*; For a wide-ranging coverage of the issue, see *Iconoclasm From Antiquity to Modernity*. For an “expanded sense” of early modern European iconoclasm, going beyond Protestant Reform, see Kim, “Creative Iconoclasms.”

⁸ See Arnade, *Beggars, Iconoclasts, and Civic Patriots*; and Horst, “The Duke of Alba.” A bronze medal c. 1574-7 celebrating the statue’s destruction is today housed at the Fogg Museum, Harvard Art Museums, object number 2004.190.

⁹ The main source for the study of this episode is the record of an inquiry dated 1609, in *As Gavetas*, vol. 6, 370-98. Also see Subrahmanyam, *The Career and Legend*, 16-8, and Bethencourt, “O Estado da Índia,” 307-11.

¹⁰ Niccoli, *Rinascimento anticlericale*, 133.

¹¹ Thomaz, “Factions, Interests and Messianism.”

¹² Fonseca, *An Historical and Archaeological Sketch*, 192-4; Gonçalves, *Telas e esculpturas*, 19-47; Moreira, “A primeira comemoração.”

¹³ Couto, *Dos feitos*, dec. 12, 15. Couto succeeded João de Barros in composing the *Décadas*, the official chronicle of the Portuguese empire in Asia.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, dec. 12, 111-20. On the Municipal Council of Goa, see Boxer, *Portuguese Society in the Tropics*, 12-41.

¹⁵ Souza, *Medieval Goa*, 109-31. For a description of Goa on the eve of the Portuguese conquest, see Pissurlencar, “As primitivas capitais,” 16-9. Regarding the renovation of the city in the early decades of Portuguese rule, see Moreira, “Goa em 1535.”

¹⁶ Correia, *Lendas da Índia*, tom. 2, 376.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, tom. 2, 460. Also see Albuquerque, *Comentarios*, tom. 1, 235-6. Albuquerque’s sepulchre was partially destroyed under orders of Governor Lopo Soares de Albergaria (g. 1515-8), his successor. It later became the site of a peculiar ritual performed by Governor Dom João de Castro (g. 1545-8) during the celebrations of the “triumph of Diu” of 1546 that took place in Goa the year after. See Correia, *Lendas da Índia*, tom. 2, 472, and tom. 4, 591, respectively.

¹⁸ *Vida e Acções*, 100 (pt. I, chap. 26).

¹⁹ Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal (hereafter BNP), Reservados, mss. 207, no. 162 (nineteenth-century copy).

²⁰ *Vida e Acções*, 64-5 (pt. I, chap. 13).

²¹ The Inquisitors of Goa to the General-Inquisitor in Lisbon, Goa, 22 November 1593, in *A Inquisição de Goa*, vol. 2, 147-8. A description of Albuquerque's statue can be found in Laval, *Voyage*, pt. 2, 52. Also see Saldanha, *História de Goa*, vol. 2, 145-7.

²² Governor Fernão de Albuquerque to Philip III, Goa, 20 February 1621, in *Documentos remetidos*, tom. 7, 113. Regarding Noronha's deification, see Flores and Cruz, "A 'Tale of Two Cities'," 120-3.

²³ Viceroy Dom Francisco da Gama to Dom Miguel de Moura (governor of Portugal), n.d. [late 1599?], BNP, Reservados, cod. 1975, fols. 263r-4v.

²⁴ *As Gavetas*, vol. 6, 371.

²⁵ Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy*. For the Iberian context, see Rodriguez de la Flor, *Pasiones frías*. A discussion of *omertà* cases in contemporary Florence can be found in Brackett, *Criminal Justice and Crime*.

²⁶ *As Gavetas*, vol. 6, 397. On the High Court (*Relação*) of Goa, see Santos, 'Goa é a chave de toda a Índia', 177-87.

²⁷ *As Gavetas*, vol. 6, 381.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 6, 389, 388.

²⁹ On the short-lived Portuguese Council of India (1608-14), see Luz, *O Conselho da Índia*.

³⁰ Goa, 30 December 1610, BNP, Reservados, cod. 1975, fol. 214r.

³¹ A version of this speech is included in Couto, *Diogo do Couto orador*, 75-83. It should correspond to the copy sent to Lisbon together with the letter from Távora to Vidigueira, Goa, 15 February 1610, BNP, Reservados, cod. 1975, fol. 227r.

³² Sousa, *Ásia Portuguesa*, vol. 5, 240. Further information in *As Gavetas*, vol. 6, 394 and 380 respectively. On the infamous parade of Vidigueira in 1628, see *Instrumento de testemunhas*.

³³ King Philip III to Viceroy Dom Jerónimo de Azevedo, Lisbon, 17 January 1614, in *Documentos remetidos*, tom. 3, 2-3.

³⁴ For Europe in general, see Terry-Fritsch, “Execution by Image.”

³⁵ Marcocci and Paiva, *História da Inquisição Portuguesa*, 112-5.

³⁶ See Moschetti, “Il Gobbo di Rialto”; Horodowich, “The Gossiping Tongue”; De Vivo, *Information and Communication*, 136-41.

³⁷ Couto, *Dos feitos*, dec. 6, 308-10.

³⁸ On the recovery of Pasquino (a statue dating from the third century BCE), see Barkan, *Unearthing the Past*, 209-31.

³⁹ The main documents concerning this episode are published in *Assentos*, vol. 2, 18-26. Sousa makes a brief reference to it in *Ásia Portuguesa*, vol. 6, 438. Also see Pissurlencar, “Antigualhas II”; Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire*, 235-8.

⁴⁰ *Assentos*, vol. 2, 20-1, n. 1.

⁴¹ Corteguera, *Death by Effigy*, 174, 201.

⁴² Disney, “The Viceroy Count of Linhares”; Disney “The Viceroy as Entrepreneur.”

⁴³ Alcalá de Henares, Archivo Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús de la Provincia de Toledo, E-2: 104,8.

⁴⁴ Panzanelli, “Compelling Presence,” 13.

⁴⁵ State Council, Goa, 16 October 1635, in *Assentos*, vol. 2, 19-20.

⁴⁶ Cañeque, *The King’s Living Image*, 30.

⁴⁷ Ortalli, *La pittura infamante*; Edgerton, *Pictures and Punishment*.

⁴⁸ Sousa, *Ásia Portuguesa*, vol. 6, 438.

⁴⁹ Kodres, “Magic of Presence.”

⁵⁰ Kolofsky, *Evening’s Empire*.

⁵¹ Curto, *Cultura política*, 259-74. Specifically for Goa, see Ferreira, “A Restauração de 1640,” 88-98.

⁵² City of Goa to King John IV, Goa, 12 December 1641, Lisbon, Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (hereafter AHU), Conselho Ultramarino (hereafter CU), Índia, box 23, doc. 82, fol. 9r.

⁵³ Goa, 3 March 1648, in *Arquivo da Relação*, pt. 2, 491-2.

⁵⁴ This case has made the object of a minute juridical analysis by the Overseas Council in Lisbon in 1651. See AHU, CU, Índia, box 36, doc. 68.

⁵⁵ For the Portuguese case, see Voigt, “Imperial Celebrations.”

⁵⁶ Franco and Santos, “Escultura de madeira,” 51. The authors of this article instead suggest that the statue was produced for the royal entry of Philip I in Lisbon, 1581.

⁵⁷ Parker, *Global Crisis*; Israel, “Mexico and the General Crisis.”

⁵⁸ BNP, Reservados, cod. 1975, fol. 200r.

⁵⁹ Bouza, *Palavra e imagen*, 89-149; Jordan-Gschwend, *Retrato de corte*.

⁶⁰ This obviously stems from the distinction between “body politic” and “body natural” put forward by Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies*.

⁶¹ Bouza, “Por qué pintado,” 31.

⁶² Dias, “The Palace of the Viceroy,” 68-97.

⁶³ Correia, *Lendas da Índia*, tom. 4, 588-92, 597-8. Also see Couto, *Dos feitos*, dec. 6, 311-21. Regarding this gallery, see Jordan-Gschwend, “*Uomini Illustri*,” 73-8. On

Castro's celebratory agenda, see Martins, "Império e imagem," 229-302, esp. 275-288 (specifically on the the Viceroy's gallery).

⁶⁴ *Vida e Acções*, 65-6 (pt. I, chap. 13).

⁶⁵ Viceregal *portaria*, Reis Magos, 9 September 1652, AHU, CU, Índia, box 38, doc. 109.

⁶⁶ Francisco de Mello de Castro to Viceroy Dom Vasco de Mascarenhas, Goa, 10 September 1652, AHU, CU, Índia, box 38, doc. 109.

⁶⁷ Royal *alvará*, Lisbon, 21 March 1654, AHU, CU, Índia, box 38, doc. 109.

⁶⁸ On this and other similar contemporary episodes across the Portuguese empire, see Figueiredo, "O Império em apuros," 197-254.

⁶⁹ Fray António da Conceição, Goa, 1 January 1654, in Fitzler, *Ceilão e Portugal*, 136.

⁷⁰ *As Gavetas*, vol. 6, 375.

⁷¹ Bouza, *Portugal no tempo dos Filipes*, chaps. 8 and 10; Disney, "From Viceroy of India," 114-29.

⁷² AHU, CU, Índia, box 38, doc. 109.

⁷³ Cañeque, *The King's Living Image*. For the viceroys of the *Estado*, see Santos, "Los virreyes del Estado de la India," 71-117.

⁷⁴ Viceregal *alvará*, Goa, 7 August 1602, stating that Albuquerque's portrait was put there "eighty years ago," in Gonçalves, *Telas e esculturas*, 10.

⁷⁵ *As Tapeçarias de D. João de Castro*; Martins, "Império e imagem."

⁷⁶ Pereira, "A fama portuguesa," 47-80; Vila-Santa, *Entre o Reino e o império*, 194-203, 341-9.

⁷⁷ Couto, *Dos feitos*, dec. 12, 111-20.

⁷⁸ Couto, *Dos feitos*, dec. 12, 120.

⁷⁹ Gonçalves, *Telas e esculturas*, 9-14.

⁸⁰ City of Goa to King John IV, Goa, 30 November 1645; Overseas Council report, Lisbon, 31 October 1646, AHU, CU, Índia, box 30, doc. 59.

⁸¹ Bouza, *Papeles y opinión*, 131-58; Cardim, “Una Restauração visual?.”

⁸² Ferreira, “A Restauração de 1640,” 17.

⁸³ City of Goa to King John IV, Goa, 30 November 1645; Overseas Council report, Lisbon, 31 October 1646, both documents in AHU, CU, Índia, box 30, doc. 59.

⁸⁴ AHU, CU, Índia, box 34, doc. 77.

⁸⁵ *Cultural History of Early Modern European Streets*.

⁸⁶ On the existing condition and the historical travails of both the portraits and the gallery, see Azevedo, “Retratos dos vice-reis”; Reis, “A galeria dos vice-reis”; Sá, *Vice-reis e governadores*.

⁸⁷ *Archivo da Relação de Goa*, pt. 1, 463; Sousa, *Ásia Portuguesa*, vol. 6, 438.

⁸⁸ Clunas, *Pictures and Visuality*, 152.

⁸⁹ Olivari, *Avisos, pasquines y rumores*; Castillo Gómez, *Entre la pluma y la pared*. For Brazil, see Figueiredo, “*Escritos pelas paredes*”; Moreira, “*Litterae Adsunt*.”

⁹⁰ *Ordenações Filipinas*, vol. 3, bk. 5, tit. 84.

⁹¹ Silva y Figueroa, *Comentarios de la Embaxada*, vol. 2, 661.

⁹² AHU, CU, Índia, box 23, doc. 82.

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