Queering Sodomy: Interpreting the Trial of Luiz da Costa

Julie Elizabeth Redekopp
The University of New Mexico

In 1743, Luiz da Costa, a Brazilian slave of African descent from Pernambuco, stood trial for sodomy before the Tribunal of the Portuguese Inquisition in Lisbon. He claimed that his master had forced him to participate in *o pecado nefando* 'the nefarious sin' (sodomy), framing the event as "one of violent domination" (McKnight and Garofalo 268). Although da Costa was required to confess to sodomy as part of the inquisitional process, he nevertheless managed to navigate this process successfully and remove himself from the possibility of further abuse by his master. At the end of his trial, da Costa was reprimanded and served with an injunction never to commit sodomy again, a punishment that was extremely light given the historical context (Gordon 272).

This essay examines the nature of da Costa's subject position in the socio-political context of the early modern Ibero-Atlantic world. I will show that it is reasonable to assume that da Costa was aware of the nature of sodomy as "the nefarious sin" and that he was aware of the basics of the inquisitional process of denouncement. The successful outcome of da Costa's trial proceedings was indicative of his agency: he strategically portrayed components of his multiple identities (black, slave, young man, and sodomite) in order to achieve a desirable outcome. I argue that da Costa effectively queered the hegemonic discourse by portraying his subject position in strategic ways, establishing for himself a position of moral rectitude by placing his master in the position of moral transgressor. Da Costa subverted the hegemony of social relations by transforming his passive subject position as recipient of the act of *sodomia perfeita* 'perfect sodomy' into an active position: he created a strategic, discursive space from which he was able to assert his superiority to his master and receive a lenient verdict. He did this through the number and type of details that he offered about the act of sodomy in which he participated.

The term queer theory carries with it various connotations and no fixed definition. It opposes intents to limit it according to rigid classifications, be they social or academic, just as the identities that are the objects of its analysis refuse the limiting influences of categorization. The term queer "acquires its meaning

from its oppositional relation to the norm" (Halperin 62); it calls attention to a "disidentification from the rigidity with which identity categories are enforced and from beliefs that such categories are immovable" (Giffney and O'Rourke 3). The act of queering a text is the act of interpreting the text from an unaccustomed angle that often, although not necessarily, includes a sexual or gender component. Queering a text is a transformative process involving the active participation of the reader in questioning not only the text itself, but also the suppositions that the reader brings to the text. It also involves a questioning of the underlying suppositions that form the bases of academic discourses about the social hegemony pertaining to the primary document that is being interpreted.

A queer reading is appropriate to the early modern Ibero-Atlantic context. Scholars Josiah Blackmore and Gregory Hutcheson describe a queerness that is essential to the nature of the early modern Iberian world. Iberia was a border space where identity was constructed in terms of dualities and was "constantly [being] challenged and reconstructed—[it was] the site of both an encounter and a resistance, an attraction and a repulsion that were not necessarily mutually exclusive" (4-5). This description of Iberia as border space and site of contested identities may be logically extended to apply to the Ibero-Atlantic world in the early modern historical context, due to the transplantation of ideological structures of thought and hegemony from the Old World to the New World, and also because of the very nature of the New World itself as a border space and site of contested identities.

The Inquisition played an important role in the regulation of identity in this social and historical context. In its regulatory function, the Inquisition promoted cultural and religious homogeneity by actively seeking out and physically punishing the "Other," identified as non-normative and deviant in comparison to the Christian ideal as configured by the Church. The Inquisition's purpose, as an institution, quickly evolved from its original goal of "protecting the Catholic faith and doctrine" to protecting "conventional morality" by defining sexual abnormalities, such as sodomy, as abominable sins against nature and by persecuting the people who committed these transgressions (Alves Dias 50). Sexual acts between persons of the same sex became known as *pecado nefando*, a sin that was *contra natura.* This term is translated as "against nature," i.e., a sin committed against the natural reproductive function of humanity, which was regarded as the only acceptable purpose of sexual activity (Alves Dias 51). "To the clergy belonged not only religious education, that is to say, the moral formation of the community, but also authoritative knowledge of what was a sin and what one could or could not do, especially in the realm of sex" (Alves Dias 52).

According to Michel Foucault, systems of power, such as the Inquisition, are "systems of social and discursive relations that reproduce themselves by reducing persons in subordinate positions to docile bodies upon which the law [conventions of the hegemonic order] is inscribed" (135-169). Foucault describes how the law reaches and manipulates the body of the condemned: "the body . . . serves as an instrument or intermediary . . . [it] is caught up in a system of constraints and representations, obligations and prohibitions" (11). Foucault asserts that discipline, or regulation, is accomplished through techniques of surveillance, observation, recording and training (Hunt and Wickham 20). This type of regulation is obvious in the Inquisition's treatment of sodomites.

Da Costa's trial was swift compared to similar proceedings that took months or years. He arrived at the Inquisition jail in Lisbon, Portugal, on July 23, 1743; he was tried on July 30 and received a surprisingly light sentence on August 16 (Gordon 272). His trial consisted of these key elements: an assigned guardian because of his age (da Costa was under twenty five old and thus considered a minor), his confession, the certification of the evidence by the tribunal, his reprimand, and his swearing to secrecy (Gordon 272). Several of these elements are detailed in the passages below, taken from da Costa's Inquisition records:

> The inquisitor Manoel Varejão Távora . . . commanded that Luiz da Costa, imprisoned defendant in these proceedings and also present, appear before him. Because da Costa said that he was under twenty-five years of age, the *licenciate* Felipe Néri, chaplain of the Penitence Prison and also present, was commanded to appear before the board. He was told that because da Costa was a minor, they designated him as his guardian so that he might lend Luiz his authority and make it possible for the young man to stand trial. . . . [Da Costa] was received into the custody of the prison of this Inquisition . . . [where he] requested a hearing. And being present . . . and having asked to confess his misdeeds, he was administered the oath of the Holy Gospels, on which he placed his hand, and under the authority of which he was commanded to tell the truth and to maintain secrecy, all of which he swore to fulfill.
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> And he said that he was called Luiz da Costa, black male, slave of Manoel Alves Cabral. (Gordon 275)

An obligatory component of Inquisition proceedings was the confession. Although da Costa maintained that he was forced to commit sodomy against his will, he was required to use the narrative structure of the confession to relate his story. The scribe recorded da Costa's confession according to the conventions of the genre. As this passage from the trial shows, da Costa was obliged to keep

within the narrative parameters of the confessional genre in order to be granted the opportunity to tell his story, though he claimed to have been victimized by his master.

> And then he was advised that, because he had decided to follow such good counsel as to desire to confess his misdeeds, it would much behoove him to recall all of them so that he might form from them a whole and true confession, not imputing, however, to himself or to others false testimony, for only the telling of the truth is proper for clearing his conscience, saving his soul, and satisfactorily resolving his case. (Gordon 277)

When analyzing da Costa's Inquisition documents, it is important to take into consideration the conventions of the confessional genre, the subjectivity of the scribe, and the requirements of formulaic language. These factors mitigate, but do not silence, da Costa's voice.

The quoted passages from the primary text draw the reader's attention to another key element of inquisitional proceedings: secrecy. Luiz Mott describes secrecy as an important part of the Inquisition's function as social monitor (64). Inquisition procedure called for the accused to be detained without disclosing the reasons for this action. The accused was detained until he or she confessed to whatever crime interested the inquisitors. This method had the potential of revealing additional transgressions that might later be pursued by the Inquisition (Alves Dias 53).

When analyzing inquisitional records for evidence of da Costa's agency, it is noteworthy that the participants' speech was not recorded verbatim; it was instead summarized in third-person narration by the scribe and edited according to the established writing conventions of the time, which included puritanical and formulaic language (Alves Dias 54-55; Gordon 272). Nonetheless, inquisitional documents provide "an account . . . rich in details" (Alves Dias 55) when analyzed in context, because the participants' testimony reveals "an entire world of social relations . . . along with attitudes towards life and the law" (Alves Dias 54). These details were used by officials of the Inquisition to establish the nature of the crime and also factored heavily at the time of sentencing. For example, it was important for the Inquisition to identify the active and passive partners of the sexual act (the penetrator and the penetrated). These roles, as well as other descriptive details, e.g., whether penetration and/or ejaculation had taken place, helped to determine the "perversity" level of the accused (Alves Dias 55). Such details are included in the scribe's recording of da Costa's testimony:

> When they were alone his master induced him to commit acts of sodomy,

> threatening and intimidating him with the musket that he had, saying that he would kill him if he did not consent to what he intended to effectuate. And in spite of the repugnance that he felt, obliged by fear he consented to the turpitude, realizing with . . . his master a consummated act of sodomy . . . performing Luiz the passive role and his master the active. And on many other occasions, and in diverse places [his master] attempted to induce him into the same turpitude. (Gordon 277)

The key elements in the denunciation were identified and weighed by the officials to determine whether the crime was of a major or minor nature as well as to define the level of the accused's perversity. According to Mott, the 1613 *regimento* 'regulations' of the Holy Office stipulated that from that year on, only *sodomia perfeita,* defined as anal penetration with ejaculation (Gordon 271), would be prosecuted by the Inquisition. "All other homoerotic acts" (Gordon 271), were to be prosecuted by secular justice (Mott 68). Da Costa's trial documents explicitly describe the nature of the sexual act committed by him and his master as *sodomia perfeita: havendo seminação e penetração no seu vazo prepóstero* 'ejaculation and penetration in his [da Costa's] posterior orifice' (Gordon 277). The social roles of the parties involved were also relevant factors weighed by the Inquisition. Records indicate that the Inquisition retained a "certain ideological control over the denunciations [of sodomites]" (Alves Dias 52). It was common for denunciations against noblemen to be "censored or shelved": Inquisition proceedings were initiated against the nobility or the clergy only after consultation with the Inquisitor General (Alves Dias 53).

Given this context, how can we understand da Costa's successful denunciation of his master and his "lenient" (Gordon 272) treatment by the inquisitors? Richard Gordon notes that "the 1603 secular law called for the burning of any sodomite under any circumstances" (272). Thus, what were the extenuating circumstances of da Costa's case? A reason for his comparatively successful navigation of the inquisitional process was that the denunciation against his master was formally made not by him, a slave, but by the priest Manoel de Lima. Priests could not give absolution for sexual sins, but they could and did give advice and required that those partaking in an act of sodomy immediately report (i.e., confess) it to the Tribunal of the Holy Office. Alves Dias points out that "to priests fell the first and principal responsibility for repression of these sins [*pecado nefando*], although they did not belong to the staff of the Tribunal of the Inquisition" (52).

Da Costa's trial proceedings were initiated by de Lima, but according to inquisitional documents, this priest did not directly witness the act of sodomy between da Costa and his master. De Lima observed da Costa running from his

master and for this reason "[he] . . . later asked Luiz what happened, and . . . Luiz told him the facts as described in the documents" (Gordon 277). All needed to prove transgressions of sodomy was the depositions of two witnesses, even of two different acts, as well as the confession of the defendant himself (Mott 66). Inquisitional documents indicate there was another witness to the act of sodomy initiated by da Costa's master, a slave called José. Da Costa is also a witness to José's sodomizing by the master:

> [Luiz] stated that . . . while in the house of his master with another black called José, also a slave of the same master, and while they were both sleeping in a bed, his master came repeatedly to be with them while they were sleeping, and got into the bed between them. Luiz clearly and distinctively perceived . . . deeds with said black José, acts of consummated sodomy, which said black later declared to him to have been exactly what he had comprehended. (Gordon 277)

The number and type of details that da Costa gave to de Lima, along with the fact that he related his story to the priest, may be interpreted as agency on da Costa's part. Gordon writes that during Lent in Pernambuco, the Inquisition published a list of forbidden behaviors and required that residents confess their sins and report those of others. From this information, we can deduce that da Costa was aware that sodomy was a sin punishable by the Inquisition and that he also knew how to make a denunciation to the Inquisition (Gordon 270). We can make the logical supposition that he viewed participation in the trial process preferable to his master's continuous abuse.

Another extenuating circumstance in the case was da Costa's age. He was considered a minor because he was under the age of twenty five; consequently, during his trial proceedings, he was appointed a guardian, Felipe Néri, Chaplain of the Penitence Prison. RonaldoVainfas states that inquisitional records distinguish between "characteristic homosexuals or sodomites—single, mature or even old men who had shown a clear preference for individuals of the same sex" (346) and young individuals such as da Costa who did not engage in repeated acts of sodomy and/or did not willingly commit the acts.

Vainfas provides additional historical context for da Costa's case. He writes that, "the Africans, the Creoles, and the mulattos ended up being lowered to the status of sex objects for their masters, masters' sons, and protégés. They were molested, beaten, and sodomized and had no other way out but to scream, flee, or, if they were very brave, denounce their torturers to the Holy Office" (354). He suggests that it was not extraordinary for a slave such as da Costa to have a "clear awareness of the sexual implications of slavery" (354) and to use this awareness, along with his knowledge of sodomy as a sin punishable by the Inquisition, to his advantage

by denouncing his master's abuses. Vainfas then describes the case of Filipe Santiago, a slave who successfully denounced his master for non-consensually and repeatedly sodomizing him. He also describes the case of Joaquim António, a young slave who successfully accused his master of violently sodomizing nearly twenty male slaves of varying ages (354). Sexual abuse of slaves was not uncommon in colonial Brazil. Most acts of sodomy occurred within relationships of hierarchy, "reproducing the social roles of partners in the 'legal world'" (357). However, as the cases of Luiz da Costa, Filipe Santiago, and Joaquim António reveal that, on occasions, individuals of African descent successfully asserted agency by using the processes of the Inquisition to achieve desirable outcomes.

Da Costa was forced to use the narrative structure of the confession to relate his experience of sodomy. It is erroneous to assume that because Luiz's voice was mediated by conventions of a certain rhetorical genre, these conventions prevented him from asserting his agency. On the contrary, da Costa appropriated the conventions of the confession genre to initiate and successfully navigate his inquisitional proceedings, thus reaching a more favorable outcome. Hayden White's theory helps to analyze the nature of narrative conventions and their representations of the past. White states: "There is an inexpugnable relativity in every representation of historical phenomena. The relativity of the representation is a function of the language used to describe and thereby constitute past events as possible objects of explanation and understanding" (27). He describes how narrative conventions used to describe past events, such as da Costa's describing his participation in an act of sodomy, result from consciously made choices about how an event might and should be portrayed and what this event means. These choices facilitate the "emplotment" of events according to a certain vision of the past that is tied to ideological or hegemonic values (8). Da Costa queers the hegemonic discourse by using a narrative convention of that discourse (the confession), which is designed to "emplot" events in the narration of a certain type of story (the guilt of the confessing sodomite) so as to tell it from an unusual angle, an angle that helps him to successfully denounce his white master. Da Costa appropriates the conventions of the confession to better his situation and assert his agency. He does this through the provided number and type of details about the sexual act. These details establish that da Costa was not the instigator of the act and that he undertook the passive role. He is careful to draw attention to two other critical factors: he did not engage in repeated acts of sodomy, although his master tried to force him to do so; his master, voluntarily and as the active party, did engage in repeated acts of sodomy. Alves Dias observes that defendants who were marginal societal figures (e.g., the black slave Luiz da Costa) usually "narrated the

'crimes' of the others in great detail as a manner of excusing themselves" (55). This type of strategy on the part of the defendants showed that they were aware that elements of social hierarchy, such as race, class, and slave/free status, had influence on inquisitional proceedings. Such a strategy also indicated that defendants were aware of their subject positions and that they rhetorically manipulated the portrayal of these subject positions to their advantage.

Da Costa's class, race, and status are examples of components of his identity that contributed toward his subject position. The term subject position is defined as "an analytical bridge between the social and the personal . . . [for it] denotes a way of enacting oneself that is made available in a particular social situation" (Kirschner and Martin 94). Intersectional theory deals with subject position. It describes how a person's identity is composed of various subcomponents. It explores how and when a person chooses to reveal these sub-identities and the resulting social consequences. Intersectional theory is applicable to social situations like da Costa's trial, where an individual, embodying multiple identity categories, performs these identities to successfully navigate overlapping systems of subordination. Intersectional theory explores "how the lived experiences of social groups are defined by and in constant struggle with multiple systems of oppression and privilege" (Perry 230). This theory deconstructs or decentralizes "hegemonic structures of classification and social ordering" (231). It provides useful tools for understanding structural convergences and political marginality in situations of exploitation, inferiorization, and conflict. The intersectional approach has been used to analyze modern legal situations, describing to which components of their identities defendants draw attention while participating in court proceedings. In legal situations, certain defenses are possible for people who present certain facets of their identities while other defenses are not. Defendants can exhibit agency by presenting certain facets of their identities, in the expectation of receiving specific outcomes.

Luiz da Costa recognized that his identity was composed of various categories, i.e., slave, person of African descent, young man, and sodomite. He also recognized that in denouncing his master, he was speaking from the position of a socially marginalized individual: he knew that he would need to speak carefully and from certain strategic positions to mitigate the negative influences of social factors. Among these factors featured the fact that he was accusing a man of higher social standing and of a different ethnicity, and that this man held power over him through the institution of slavery. Da Costa drew attention to specific facets of his identity: those of his young age, of one violently coerced into an act of sodomy, and of his passive role in this act of sodomy (da Costa did not penetrate anyone's

body). Kirschner and Martin write that, "in social life (indeed, even in the course of a single interaction), many subject positions are made available. Herein lie possibilities for some degree of personal agency, as well as for the emergence of novel meanings" (94). In the Lacanian sense, the subject is defined as "*not* that which corresponds exactly to any living, active being; rather, the 'subject' is . . . only an *attribute* of such a being" (72). According to Lacan, the field of language constitutes the subject (Smith 72). Da Costa effectually queered hegemonic discourse by using his subject position of racial/ethnic Other and sodomite—facets of his identity that had negative symbolic significance within the hegemony—to successfully denounce his master and obtain a lenient trial outcome. He did so by drawing attention to the power differential that came with his identity as black slave and minor by stating that he once committed sodomy as a passive party and under violent coercion.

Jacques Lacan theorized that subject position within discourse is determined by various elements and that it influences how people interact with language—the Symbolic Order (Klages 91). The feminist theorist Hélène Cixous continued the Lacanian tradition while analyzing the "phallogocentric" nature of patriarchal language and cultural systems (elements of her ideas may be used to analyze da Costa's case). The term "phallogocentrism" combines the terms phallocentrism and logocentrism and "implies that masculine biases are . . . inseparable from linguistic conventions . . ." (Childers and Hentzi 225). According to Cixous, phallogocentric systems are comprised of binary terms that oppose each other. Certain terms (i.e., "free or property-owning," "of Iberian heritage," or "heterosexual") are privileged and placed on one side of the binary division; those terms that remain (i.e., "slave," "of African heritage," or "sodomite") are relegated to the other side and labeled as Other and undesirable (Klages 98). The binary terms that constitute phallogocentric systems and their associated connotations of value "extend to the positioning of bodies in society and to the codification of sexual difference found in . . . symbolic practices . . . [such as] major discourses governing society," e.g., those of the Catholic Church and its regulatory body, the Inquisition (Conley 56).

Let us now examine the Lacanian concept of the *points de capiton* 'quilting points,' which may be applied to the idea of sodomy herein described as part of a valorized discourse depicting the sodomite as Other (a de-valorized and negative subject position). According to Lacan, a prominent role is given retroactively or retrospectively to some signifiers, a process that stops the otherwise endless movement of signification in language. These special signifiers are called *points de capiton*, and they "fix the meaning of a whole chain of signifiers" (Stavrakakis 60). Yannis Stavrakakis points out the following:

> Since it is it impossible to attach a definite signification to a signifier, what the *point de capiton* does is link signifiers to signifiers. The *point de capiton* fixes the signifier to a signifying knot . . . the existence of *points de capiton* never produces an externally stable meaning, only a relative and temporary—albeit necessary—fixation; nevertheless, this fixation is, most of the time, mythically invested with the properties of the final one . . . the sedimentation of meaning affected by the *point de capiton* is of a mythical nature (60).

The work of Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe is built upon the foundation of Lacan and his *points de capiton.* Laclau and Mouffe explore the notion of hegemonic contingency. Their concepts of "nodal points" and "articulation" (Torfing 98) are useful when analyzing da Costa's trial. The term "nodal point" is a continuation of Lacan's *points de capiton*. The concept of sodomy may be considered as a nodal point, or privileged discursive point, in Catholic religious ideology and in hegemonic discourse. A nodal point is a point in discourse where a variety of threads come together in the cloth of ideology. At the nodal point, these threads have relations of contingency that support and give form to the ideological discourse. The relationships connecting these threads, although contingent, are not necessary. What makes a nodal point special is the emphasis given to it retroactively in discourse—it receives emphasis because of its utility and because different threads of the discourse converge at that point.

The nodal point of sodomy is emphasized within the discourse of Catholic religious ideology. This discourse gives sodomy special emphasis and it fixes the meaning of chains of signifiers. It defines the sodomite as Other and upholds what it defines as behaviors indicative of the normative identity, i.e., sexual practices between a man and a woman for the sole purpose of procreating, as opposed to those of the Other. In the context of Catholic religious ideology, the discourse that defines and persecutes the sodomite upholds heterosexual and hegemonic definitions of sex roles (the institution of marriage by extension) that support the established religious and social infrastructure of the hegemony. It must be emphasized that the threads of the aforementioned discourses could, and do, come together at points other than in sodomy. Mouffe and Laclav describe a game of control inherent to hegemonic discourses:

> Hegemonic practices of articulation constitute discourse . . . [and] this is possible because of the irreducible play of signification within discourse provides the condition of possibility of hegemonic practices. Articulation presupposes the constitutive unfixity of discourse. . . . Hegemony and discourse are *mutually conditioned* in the sense that hegemonic practice shapes and reshapes discourse, which in turn provides the condition of possibility for hegemonic articulation .

> . . both hegemony and discourse are mutually conditioned by *social antagonisms* (Torfing 42-43).

This means that it is possible for a subordinate person, like da Costa, or a subordinate group to take strategic advantage of the nature of discourse as irreducible play of signification, thus exhibiting agency and receiving a desired outcome. Since hegemony and the discourses that create and maintain it are mutually conditioned, by calling attention to a certain nodal point (a term or value in the discourse that remains unquestioned by those in power), the subordinate person or group can give rise to the possibility of other discourses, ones that are more beneficial. This is what da Costa does by calling attention to his subject position as passive recipient of an act of violent and coercive sodomy within the master-slave power differential.

Sodomy was placed under the purview of the Portuguese Inquisition in 1553 (Gordon 271). While the function of the Portuguese Inquisition was to enforce the normative social hierarchy, we see from examining da Costa's trial that, under certain conditions, its outcome could also offer opportunities to subvert the hegemony of social relations. Da Costa accomplished this subversion by claiming moral superiority over his master and thus his partial vindication. He exercised his agency by refusing to be reduced to a docile body as defined by Foucault, though he had been forced to be the passive recipient in an act of sodomy. He subverted his inferior subject position by establishing himself, the ethnic and sodomite Other, as the person with superior moral values—da Costa portrayed his master as an immoral abuser who had perpetrated the nefarious sin that had consequently inverted man's natural functions and core Christian teachings. Inherent to da Costa's claim of victimhood is his denunciation of his master's abuse of the power differential inherent to the institution of slavery. In other words, da Costa's master forced him to commit sexual acts that he abhorred and that were prohibited by the moral regulatory body, the Church.

In conclusion, although inquisitional documents reveal a formulaic paraphrasing of participants' speech thereby suggesting a reading of da Costa's role in his trial proceedings as "mute variable in a well-established pattern" (Gordon 272), this essay locates da Costa's voice in the strategy of positioning himself as the violently coerced and passive recipient of acts of sodomy that he abhorred. I have argued that Luiz da Costa was aware of his subject position, that he strategically and selectively chose to present certain facets of his identity, and that, by so doing, he appropriated the discourse of the Inquisition to remove himself from an abusive situation. This reading supports the work of McKnight and Garofalo, which asserts that da Costa's case represents an example of a person of "African

descent claim[ing] a place of belonging and social standing as subject . . . of the Iberian empires and, as such, demand[ing] protection and recognition of . . . [his] rights" (268). Although da Costa was required to confess to sodomy as part of an inquisitional process that affected the nature of his subject position as defendant, he nevertheless managed to navigate successfully through the trial process, to receive a comparatively light sentence, and to remove himself from the possibility of further abuse by his master. This discursive strategy can be read as an act of da Costa's agency that removed him from an abusive situation. In this essay, I have established that it can be reasonably assumed that da Costa was aware of the nature of sodomy as a nefarious sin and of the inquisitional process of denouncement. Thus, his agency is shown by the lenient outcome of his trial, an outcome made possible by his strategic portrayal of selective components of his identity (black, slave, young man, and sodomite victim). Da Costa queered hegemonic discourse by adroitly transforming his passive subject position of recipient of the act of *sodomia perfeita* into an active and strategic discursive position from which he was able to assert moral superiority over his master and consequently obtain a desirable verdict.

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