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was the leader of a major slave revolt in 1595, which almost succeeded in defeating the Portuguese colonial authorities in São Tomé. The hitherto uninhabited island of São Tomé was discovered by Portuguese navigators around 1471, but the successful colonization of the island began only in 1493, when Portuguese colonists established sugarcane plantations to be worked by African slaves brought from the neighboring continent. In the sixteenth century the local sugar industry prospered; however, the island was marked by continuous political instability provoked by frequent power struggles among the governor, the Catholic bishop, and the town council, which was dominated by the sugar planters. Amador was a Creole slave, that is, a slave born on the island.

From the beginning, slavery provoked resistance, and smaller slave uprisings occurred before and after Amador's revolt. In addition, gangs of runaway slaves, locally known as macambos, established maroon communities in the inaccessible dense forests in the mountainous interior of the island and frequently assaulted the plantations and attacked the town. The colonial authorities created a local militia to defend the colony and fight the maroons in the interior. The slave revolt began at a time when the decline of the island's sugar industry had begun due to the emerging sugar plantations in Brazil and when the local authorities were weakened as a result of a conflict between the Catholic bishop, Francisco de Villanova (1590–1600), and the governor Fernando de Menezes (1593–1596). In August 1594, this conflict culminated in the excommunication of the governor by the bishop, who afterward felt threatened by his enemies and fled for his life to Lisbon. Subsequently, the governor's own authority was challenged by the town council. Amador took advantage of the resulting political divisions within the settlement.

The revolt began on 9 July 1595 when slaves led by Amador and two other slave leaders, Lazaro and Domingo, entered the parish church in Trindade and killed some white men attending Mass. Thereafter a growing number of slaves assaulted plantations and burned the sugar mills and plantation houses. Two days later, during a battle in the town between the rebels and the inhabitants, three white men were killed. The next day, the slaves continued burning plantations and sugar mills in all over the island. On 14 July the militia and armed inhabitants, including the local clergy, confronted the rebels commanded by Amador in another battle. The slaves fled, but were regrouped by Amador (who had proclaimed himself king of São Tomé) into four units; in an attempt to encircle the town, each unit, under the command of one of Amador's captains, was sent to one of the principal parts of the town. Again the defenders succeeded in forcing the slaves to retreat.

After two weeks of siege, Amador, with an army of allegedly five thousand slaves, waged the final assault on the town. On 28 July the armed inhabitants and soldiers, with pieces of artillery at their disposal, marched into the battle, which continued for four hours. Finally the slaves withdrew in flight

pursued by the settler army. Many slaves were left wounded, and two hundred were dead, among them Lazaro, one of Amador's commanders. Adão, another of his captains, was taken prisoner and hanged. On 29 July more than four thousand slaves who had escaped entered the town willingly, to benefit from the clemency the governor had promised to all rebels who surrendered. Four other slave leaders were arrested and hanged.

Amador was betrayed by his companions and arrested. According to the only existing contemporaneous document of the revolt, on 14 August 1595 Amador was hanged and quartered, and his heart was placed on a pillow. About sixty of the island's approximately eighty-five sugar mills had been destroyed during Amador's revolt, which proved to be one of greatest slave uprisings in Atlantic history. The revolt accelerated the emigration of the São Tomé planters to Brazil, which had already begun a decade earlier, since sugar production in Brazil offered better economic prospects. After independence in 1975, the government of São Tomé and Príncipe considered Amador a national hero of the country's anticolonial struggle. Since 1976, when the Portuguese escudo was replaced by the new national currency, the dobra, the country's bank notes have depicted Amador's portrait, which was entirely created by a local artist after independence. In 2004 the National Assembly in São Tomé declared 4 January as a national holiday in homage of Amador. The date was based on a rather unreliable secondary source of the early nineteenth century, according to which Amador was executed on 4 January 1596.

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