'Pretos' and 'Pardos' between the Cross and the Sword: Racial Categories in Seventeenth Century Brazil

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This paper discusses the meanings of 'race' in the Portuguese empire on the basis of two historical case studies. The twin processes of miscegenation, in the biological sense, and cultural intermixing has engendered intermediate strata that have long stimulated the imagination of historians. In Brazilian historiography, considerable emphasis has been given to the invention of the 'mulato', as proposed by Alencastro (2000, 345-356), and the ethnogenesis of the 'pardo' in Portuguese America, as described in an article by Schwartz (1996). Compared to these interpretations of the emergence of these intermediate categories in Portuguese America, the two cases presented here appear to suggest a more central role for the early demographic impact of access to manumission in colonial society and the possibilities for social mobility among the free peoples of African descent.

Europeans and Africans in the Portuguese Empire

Mixing between Europeans and Africans in the Portuguese Empire produced hierarchical categories for racial gradations during the seventeenth century. Only in this period were the categories 'mulato' and 'pardo' included in the regulations for Purity of Blood (*Estatutos de Pureza de Sangue*), which determined who could have access to the same honours and privileges that the old Christian Portuguese received. From the seventeenth century onwards, those regulations stipulated that 'no one of the race of Jew, Moor or Mulato' (*Raça alguma de Judeu, Mouro ou Mulato)* was eligible to receive certain honours and privileges from the crown (Carneiro 1988, cap. 2; Lahon 2001, 516-520).

At least up to the second half of the eighteenth century, the expansion of the Portuguese empire was based on a corporativist conception of society and power. Society was considered an integrated organism, with a natural order and hierarchy created by divine will. The king, as the head of this body, was responsible for distributing favours according to the functions and privileges of each of its members, thereby exercising justice in the name of God. According to Xavier and Hespanha (1993, 130), 'from a social point of view, corporativism contributes to the image of a strictly hierarchical society, because in a naturally ordered society, the irreducibility of social functions leads to the irreducibility of legal and institutional statutes'.[1] In historical reality, the continuous expansion of Portuguese society in the colonial period tended to create a myriad of subdivisions and classifications within the traditional representation of the three medieval orders (clergy, nobility and the common people), by expanding the nobility and its privileges, redefining functions, and subdividing the common people into 'clean' and 'unclean' states (the latter included the *ofícios mecânicos*, or manual trades).

This ongoing transformation was not limited to territory in Europe, but had

ramifications throughout a vast empire, which expanded in the name of spreading the Catholic faith. In this process of contact with other peoples, legal concepts were developed to deal with the new groups who converted to Catholicism and thus integrated into the body of the empire. Since at least the fifteenth century, in addition to restrictions on those who practiced the 'manual trades', the concept of cleanliness of blood determined differentiations among the common people and limited the expansion of the nobility, imposing a range of restrictions on the descendants of Jews, Moors and Gypsies. The restrictions based on the 'purity of blood statutes', enacted later in Portugal than in Spain, date back to the *Ordenações Afonsinas* of 1446-7 (Carneiro 1988, chap. 2; Lahon 2001, 516-520).

The war against the Moors frequently involved taking captive and enslaving prisoners of war (this happened on both sides, sometimes accompanied by elaborate negotiations over ransom payments), and at the same time it stimulated the participation of European merchants in the prosperous slave market of North Africa. In 1455, the Papal Bull *Romanus Pontifex* justified the commerce in slaves and their introduction into Christian Europe by the Portuguese crown in the name of possible conversion and evangelization of the African pagans. Considered the 'charter of Portuguese imperialism', the bull conceded to the kings of Portugal,

> … free and ample faculty to … to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wheresoever placed, and the kingdoms, dukedoms, principalities, dominions, possessions, and all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and possessed by them *and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery* (cited in: Soares 2000, 74-75) [author's emphasis].[2]

The captive status became, from that point on, the form *par excellence* of incorporating individuals into the Portuguese empire and the Catholic faith who had been 'saved' from paganism through the black slave trade or through a just war. These notions often became interchangeable, in reference to the Portuguese presence on the African coast (Alencastro 2000, 168-180). The justness of a war was decided by the king and was generally linked to defence, ensuring liberty to preach the gospel, and for some, ensuring freedom for commerce (Hespanha and Santos 1993, 396). In this context, slave trade was introduced just as the Portuguese were exploring the west coast of Africa.

Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, more than one million persons were brought as slaves to the Iberian Peninsula. At the end of the sixteenth century, slaves accounted for around 10 per cent of the population of Algarve and Lisbon (Vincent 2000). From that time, the slave presence in Portugal continued to grow in absolute numbers until the prohibition of new slaves into the kingdom by the Marquês de Pombal, in 1761 (Lahon 2001, chap. 2). Founded on relations of power and constructed in a traditional manner through the Portuguese expansion into Africa, slavery became naturalized and integrated in the corporativistic conception of society. No Portuguese legislation instituted it, but slavery's existence as a naturalized condition was evident in a wide range of legislative bodies throughout the Portuguese empire (Lara 2000). The religious justifications that underlay the system of slavery in the Portuguese Empire implied the possibility of manumission, which eventually would produce the category of freed slaves and their descendants, and the need of new social hierarchies. Slavery and the multiplication of social categories referring to the population of descendants of Africans appeared as the

most visible expression of the constant expansion of the Portuguese 'ancien régime' from an Atlantic perspective. Based on a conception of society that took itself to be immutable, but that was in fact in constant transformation, an entire new social order was created on the other side of the Atlantic.

Henrique Dias, Governor of Crioulos, Negros and Mulatos of Brazil

The case of Henrique Dias is in fact paradigmatic of the hesitations and multiple significations that marked the making of the new social order. He was the black commander of the *Terço da Gente Preta,* a regiment of slaves and freed slaves that played a decisive role in the battles against the Dutch (who occupied Portuguese possessions in Brazil and Africa in the seventeenth century) and contributed to the Portuguese victory in 1654. A hero of the war of the Pernambucan restoration (1645-1654), Henrique Dias achieved due recognition for his role in the resistance to the Dutch occupation of 1630-1638 at the time of the conquest of the *Capitania* of Pernambuco and much of the northeast cost of Brazil by the West Indies Company (Mello 1998).[3] Because of the services provided in this first phase of the war against the Dutch, Dias received through a royal letter, dated 21 July 1638, from Phillip III of Portugal and IV of Spain the promise of a minor title of nobility (*fildago*) and a knighthood in one of the military orders.[4]

According to the *Vocabulário Portuguez e Latino* by Bluteau (undated [1712] p. 110), a *terço*, as a military term, corresponds to what the Romans called a legion and what the Germans and French called a regiment.[5] The *Terço da Gente Preta*[6] (Black Regiment) or simply *terço de Henrique Dias* (Henrique Dias Regiment) emerged in Pernambuco in the first years of the war against the Dutch when Dias was named '*Governador e Cabo dos Crioulos, Negros e Mulatos do Brasil*'. This regiment remained in active service as part of the regular troops of Pernambuco until the middle of the eighteenth century (Mello, 1988, 16, 73).

According to the analysis of Olival (2001, 19-20), we can consider the 'distributive justice' of the military orders and the modern Portuguese state, especially the concession of a royal favour (*mercês*) in compensation for services provided to the crown, as a central element of the constitution of the legitimacy of royal power in the absolutist Portuguese state. According to Olival, the principle of 'giving to each what is theirs' (*dar a cada hum o que he seu*) guided the royal liberality, a right specific to the king in the political culture of the Portuguese *ancien régime*. Thanks to this liberality, Henrique Dias received his first royal favour in remuneration for his services in Brazil.

During the wars of the conquests, the decorations and knighthoods in the military orders fulfilled a fundamental political role in motivating and rewarding services with risk to life and limb carried out overseas. But even though the decorations and knighthoods were dispensed through royal liberality, the confirmation of these favours depended on specific qualifications as decided by the *Mesa de Consciência e Ordens* (a religious council). These prerequisites were defined by the *definitórios* (rules) of each of the orders, which in the seventeenth century included demands related to purity of blood (meaning not being a descendant of Moors, Jews or pagans) and the absence of any 'mechanical defect' (not descending of manual workers) for at least three generations. In regard to the Jews and Moors, sometimes the definitórios demanded the complete absence of any *raça má* (evil race) 'however remote it might be', which meant taking into consideration even

rumours or 'public knowledge' of such (Carneiro 1988, 100-101; Olival 2001, 283-286). The Mesa de Consciência e Ordens in Madrid, according to Dutra (1979, 27) considered it 'ignominious' to concede a knighthood in one of the military orders to a Negro who had been a slave, even if he had served outside the Kingdom of Castile. Thus, despite the royal intentions, it appears that Henrique Dias never did receive the knighthood that had been promised him on that occasion.[7] Nevertheless, the confirmation of the title of *Governador dos Crioulos, Negros e Mulatos* a short time later by the Letters Patent from the Conde da Torre, dated 4 September 1639, was perhaps a way to identify his place in the social hierarchy.

Henrique Dias did, however, receive a second royal favour. After the restoration and the Portuguese victory in Pernambuco, he was graced with a new favour through a decree dated 27 April 1654, this time from the Portuguese king Dom João IV.[8] It was as beneficiary of these favours that Henrique Dias reached Lisbon, in March of 1656, to 'request recompense for his services carried out in the Brazilian wars' from the Overseas Council.

The royal favours could be obtained by 'means of grace', as an outcome of pure royal liberality, or by 'means of justice' as compensation for services provided (Olival 2001, 22). In general, the compensatory favours were requested by the interested party through a consultation with the Royal Council or the Overseas Council, which analyzed the solicitation in the case of services provided in the Atlantic. According to Olival (2001, 24), the notion of compensatory favours (*mercês remuneratórias*) 'allowed the services to become patrimony; they were goods like any others; they were inherited, divided, contested in the courts in terms of their adequate remuneration and ownership, etc.' Even if the royal will was not subject to law or any other restriction, 'serving the crown, with the object of requesting recompense in trade, became almost a way of life for different sectors of Portuguese society' (Olival 2001, 21).

Despite the many services provided by Henrique Dias to the crown in the Brazilian War, he requested little directly for himself in his solicitation. Instead he requested that the decorations and knighthood in the Order of Christ that had been awarded to him as a favour in 1654 be conceded to his son-in-law 'Pedro de Val de Vezo, a very noble person'. He further requested that the promise that was made,

> … in the time of the government of Castile go to the person who marries his daughter Dona Guiomar and that for his two other daughters Your Majesty also award the favour of two knighthoods for the persons who marry them, with which favour they will easily find honoured solders who will marry them …[9]

For himself, he requested,

> … two hundred thousand *réis* of income to support himself, and to be able to serve while he can and since he has no son, in which your memory is perpetuated, let Your Majesty award the favour of title of nobility to the husbands of his daughters and that although such generous favours owe more to the greatness of Your Majesty than his rewards that he could expect just with respect to what he has done … to other persons that were not so continuous in the war, nor had such good success in it as Henrique Dias had.[10]

The Governor of the Negroes appeared to be well advised in his visit to the court. Despite the opposition from the *Procurador da Fazenda* (Attorney for the Finance Ministry), and some discussion about the value of the pension, almost all his de-

mands were considered favourably by the council and were granted by Queen D. Luiza de Gusmão, including the pension he had requested for himself and the titles of nobility for his sons-in-law. In fact, in not personally accepting the decorations and knighthoods of the military orders, Henrique Dias exempted himself and the Mesa de Consciência e Ordens from the need to investigate the restrictions regarding his parents and grandparents. According to the opinion issued by the council and confirmed in the Royal Decree (*Portaria*) of 6 June 1657, the decorations of Soure passed to his son-in-law Pedro de Val de Vezo, and the knighthood of Christ, was reserved 'for the marriage of his daughter D. Guiomar'. It was also determined 'that upon the marriage of another two daughters *with soldiers who have services*', according to the summary in the Inventory of Decrees (*Portarias*) of the kingdom,[11] or '*with solders of quality and services*', according to the approved opinion of the council, 'they will each receive a knighthood of S. Bento de Avis or Santiago'. In this way, the need for inquiries and duties was transferred to the sons-in-laws, who would have to bear the burden of the restrictions placed on the father-in-law, but who would also benefit from his many services. A socially and racially 'mixed' marriage with the daughters of Henrique Dias would thus determine the possibilities of confirmation of the transference of the favours that presupposed their marriage with men 'of qualities and services'.

D. Benta Henriques, however, married Amaro Cardigo, captain of the *Terço da Gente Preta* and son of freed slaves and grandson of slaves from Angola. In the order which had turned down the appeal he presented to solicit his induction into the Order of Santiago (a condition for the fulfilment of the favour received as son-in-law of Henrique Dias, the old *Mestre-de-Campo*), Amaro Cardigo is described as a 'black man born in the *Capitania* of Pernambuco' on 23 September 1711.[12] At any rate, there was the demand that no individual of the Jewish or of a new Christian race could receive a knighthood in the military orders, no matter how remote this 'stain of blood' was. This meant taking into account hints and rumours going back beyond three generations, while for the other converts it was enough to prove Christian heritage up to four generations. The statutes of the order expressly prohibited being the son or grandson of pagans. In this sense, a 'preto' (black) could be an old Christian. According to Dutra (1999), in the sixteenth century, at least two African Negroes – Luís Peres, a 'nobleman from the House of the King of the Congo' and D. Pedro da Silva, a 'noble knight of the royal house, a black man and ambassador of the King of Angola' – had both received a knighthood in the Order of Santiago. The same was true for a range of American Indians, converted for more than a generation to Catholicism and belonging to families of the leaders of the groups of origin, graced with decorations from the military orders (Dutra 1999, 2001; Almeida 2003).

In this regard, the refusal to recognize the favour received by Amaro Cardigo appears to be principally related to his proximity to pagan forbears and the condition of slavery. After all, over the seventeenth century the black colour had increasingly been associated with slavery, and he had explicitly acknowledged being the son of freed black slaves. In fact, the emergence and incorporation of a free population, the descendants of ex-slaves brought from Africa in Portuguese America, is a new development that occurred over the seventeenth century. Through manumissions and mixed marriages, descendants of Africans became subjects of the Portuguese Empire. They formed part of a society that, at the same time, constantly reproduced the heteronomy characteristic of the colonial process, with the repeated

incorporation of new waves of African foreigners (slaves purchased in the Atlantic slave trade) and also of indigenous peoples (brought to the settlements by slaving expeditions or enslaved by the colonists, supposedly through *resgate*, liberation from pagan captivity, or a 'just war'). The continuous incorporation of foreigners – as slaves or settled Indians – took on a structural character for the society that was forming in Portuguese America. In this process, the Brazilian colony took on a distinct character within the empire, as a colonial and slave-based society, with its particular social hierarchies and classifications.

In this process, the identity of the non-European free population migrated towards the figure of the 'pardo'. This phenomenon would refine a process of racialization, in the mode of the old regime, of social hierarchies among the free colonial population. After the legal prohibition of enslavement of the indigenous population, the pardo denomination would more often be linked to an African descent. Domingos Rodrigues Carneiro, one of the *Mestres de Campo* (field commanders) who succeeded Henrique Dias, is cited as a 'pardo' in a report in 1757 of the Palmares campaign (Alencastro, 2000, 346 and note 42, p. 464). He was a 'black man', son and nephew of blacks born in Angola, according to the *carta-padrão*, the letter that conceded to him a royal pension of 18 thousand réis in 1688 (Mello 1858, 239). The growing presence of an increasingly important stratum of descendants of Africans slaves freed some generations before, required the invention of particular forms of classification to differentiate them from the free population of old Christians, and from slaves and those recently freed, mostly of African origin. None of this was, however, clearly defined at the end of the seventeenth century.

About pretos and pardos

In an article published in the journal *Past and Present,* Richard Gray (1987, 53) presents the fascinating character of Lourenço da Silva de Mendonça. In 1682, Lourenço introduced himself in Rome with recommendations from Madrid and Lisbon, which identified him as a '*moreno* born in Brazil', and 'a pardo man born in this kingdom of Portugal', respectively. His Portuguese letter of recommendation, signed by the papal clerk Gaspar da Costa Mesquista in Lisbon in 1681, declared him the 'leading representative of all the pardos in this kingdom, in Castile and in Brazil'.[13] He also brought recommendations from Madrid, signed by Giacinto Rogio Monzon on 23 September 1682, that declared him to be the general representative of an influential brotherhood of pretos. In this position, he was authorized to establish new branches of the brotherhood in any Christian city or place.[14]

Together with these two letters of recommendation (affidavits), he sent two petitions to Pope Innocent XI. In the first, he presented himself as 'Lourenço da Silva Mendoza of Royal descent from the Kings of Congo and Angola, permanent Representative of the Congregation of Negroes and Pardos of Our Lady of the Rosary, of very high education', arguing against perpetual slavery of Christian Negroes and their descendants by white masters. For Lourenço, 'this diabolical abuse of the institution of slavery', to which he systematically added a vivid description of the tortures and abuses to which the slaves were subjected, had led many slaves in desperation to infanticide and suicide. He thus requested a papal condemnation of this practice, on pain of excommunication for those white Christians who persisted in it.[15]

In a second petition some years later, he argued in favour of the pretos and par-

dos who were born to Christian parents in Brazil and in the city of Lisbon, since white Christians had received from the Pope in the distant past a Papal Brief to convert the Negroes to the Catholic Faith and take them as slaves during this period. He argued that this authorization should not be one for 'perpetual slavery' that extends 'to their children or their children's children', already born into the bosom of Christianity and deserving of the sacrament of baptism.[16]

The surprising story of D. Lourenço tells us much about the turbulent seventeenth century, a period when the social categories and specific hierarchies of the new order emerging on the other side of the Atlantic were in a process of change. In each of his letters of recommendation, Lourenço is described differently. In the letter received from Lisbon, he appears as a 'pardo man born in this Kingdom of Portugal', which leads Gray (1997) and also Lahon (2001, chap. 12) to consider him a mulato. In fact, according to the *Vocabulario Portuguez e Latino* (Bluteau 1712), the term 'pardo' is defined as 'colour between white and black, characteristic of the *pardal* (house sparrow) from where the name appears to have come … Pardo Man: see *Mulato*'. In the Spanish letter of introduction, however, he is identified as a '*moreno* born in Brazil', which in the Spanish language predominant in seventeenth-century Spanish America referred to a black man. The most interesting definition, however, is that which he used to describe himself in the petition: 'of Royal descent from the Kings of Congo and Angola'. This claim of royal origin is not impossible, since the members of the noble families of the Kingdom of the Congo and the various kingdoms that subsequently formed the colony of Angola were enslaved in the wars that devastated the region in the seventeenth century. In this context, some were simply exiled, as free persons, to Portuguese America (Costa e Silva 2002, 489). Although described as having been born in the Kingdom of Portugal in the Portuguese letter of introduction, the reference to Brazil in the Spanish document, and the request for help with the costs of returning to his house 'in the Indies', in 1686, appear to leave no doubt that he was born in Brazil.[17]

His path in that turbulent second half of the seventeenth century, as well as those of Henrique Dias and Amaro Cardigo, reveals the emergence of a new elite of preto and pardo men who had surprising connections throughout the empire. It poses the question of the conditions that enabled him to find his place in this new world. It also sheds light on a moment in time in which, in terms of identity, pardos and pretos, Africans and their descendants in the Americas were all lumped together as descendants of Africans, and thus probably of slaves as well.

Lourenço's petitions and the attention they received from the papacy demonstrate the uncertainties that still existed in theological discussions about conditions of slavery in the heart of Christianity. As described by Alencastro (2000, 168-179) in analyzing the position of the Jesuits in the religious battles over slave traffic in the seventeenth century, the expansion of the black slave trade in Africa financed not only the emergence of the modern slave economy in the Atlantic, but also the expansion of the Catholic faith in the Americas. In fact, it proved impossible to separate the two processes. Throughout the Portuguese empire, following the tradition of Roman legislation, children born to slave women remained slaves, and even when freed, ex-slaves remained tied to their ex-masters who retained the power to revoke the freedom conceded by alleging ingratitude.[18] (Only those who had never been slaves could be considered fully free subjects of His Majesty.) Descendants of freed slaves would be barred for at least four generations from holding any high government or religious positions, as well as from the honours reserved for old

Christians (Lahon 2001, 519, note 82). Thus, descendants of freed slaves were forced to bear the stigma of the heritage of slavery (Carneiro 1988, chap. IV; Martinez 2000, 17-18).

In addition there was the aggravating factor of skin colour; the hierarchies of colour were beginning to be created at that point. Bluteau (1712), in his *Vocabulario Portuguez e Latino*, defines the word *raça* (race) as follows:

> Speaking of generations, it always takes on an evil nature. To have Race [with nothing more] leads to the same, which is to have Race of Moor or Jew. Seek to ensure that the servants of Mercy have no Race.[19] [Commitment of Mercy, page 36 back].

An eminently religious notion, the conviction that the propensity to heresy was propagated by the 'infected' blood of the 'Moors and Jews' tended to be extended also to the descendants of American Indians and Africans over the course of the seventeenth century. Ever since 1640, the '*Constituições Sinodaes*' of the Archbishopric of Lisbon already included having 'part of the Hebrew nation, or of any other infected race, or of mulato, or of Negros' as among the impediments to the Sacred Orders.[20] The restriction would be reproduced in the *Constituições Primeiras* of the Archbishopric of Bahia from 1707 (Viana 2004, 56). The Portuguese state officially incorporated this type of interdiction in a law dated 16 August 1671, which stated:

> … All persons, before entering some office, shall be made to provide information about their place of birth, with all the circumstances with which is done to bachelors, to discover if they have part of new Christian, Moor or Mulato, and if this is notorious[21] (Lahon 2001, 519, note 82).

Old Christians did not have 'raça'. In Portugal and especially in the Brazilian colony, the formulation 'with no race of Moor, Jew or Mulato' became common in countless documents produced since then (Viana 2004, chap. 1; Lahon 2001, chap. 12; Carneiro 1988, chap. 1). It is important to note, furthermore, that the words 'preto' or 'Negro' were increasingly associated with the experience of slavery, and were not even used in this type of legislation, especially in the colonial context.

The multiplication of such restrictive formulations was a response to the tendency to disrespect such formulations. In the military orders, despite the obsession with Jewish blood, countless knights from new Christian families found ways to receive decorations and knighthoods, including the Order of Christ (Olival 2001, part II, chap. 2). In this regard, the pressure from descendants of African slaves to join the military orders was much more limited, since it was not in Portugal, but rather in the Brazilian colonies, that 'mulatismo' appeared as a problem for those who intended to monopolize the positions of prestige and power. The Overseas Council, which was directly related to the colonial reality and especially to the *Capitania* of Minas Gerais, complained about the constant entry of subjects 'with mulato blood' into local government positions 'to serve as city councillors and participate in the governance of the Capitania' (Viana 2004, 58).[22] The council insisted, therefore, that no position of the Capitania should be filled by any man who is mulato to the fourth degree (Viana 2004, 58; Russel-Wood 2000, 17). According to Russel-Wood, this type of argumentation was a key indication of the significant presence of free individuals of African descent in this type of position, especially in the context of the expansion of the boundaries of colonial society.

In the same period another type of legislation addressed the role of this population with another type of racial language. The *Pragmática* of 1749, analyzed by Lara (2004, 329-342), prohibited 'negros and mulatos from the *conquistas* (colonies)' from using certain types of clothes and symbols of distinction. Because their progress and expectation of social advancement threatened the social order, there was no distinction made between free persons or slaves. However, they were considered free pardos or mulatos every time there was an effort to prevent them from occupying, as they in fact did, government positions and other specific posts in the world of the colonial order (Russel-Wood 2000). As Schwartz (1988, 213; 1996) has stressed, in Portuguese America where the white Europeans tended to occupy the principal positions of wealth and status, the boundaries between pretos, pardos and brancos (whites) always implied a social continuum between slavery and liberty, as well as a cultural continuum between Africans and Portuguese.

The *Terço* of Henrique Dias in the seventeenth century, which included Negroes*, crioulos and mulatos, was made up principally of ex-slaves and their direct descendants. This characteristic was maintained as the defining element of the regiments called *dos Henriques* in the eighteenth century, from which, however, the companies of pardos tended to separate (Russel-Wood 1982, chap. 5). The brotherhoods said to be pretos maintained strong links to the groups coming from Africa or who had recently experienced slavery (Soares 2000). The brotherhoods of pardos, some of which had emerged as early as the seventeenth century, would do this with the principal concern of being able to distinguish between slaves and ex-slaves, especially Africans (Viana 2004, cap. 2).

As some studies have shown, the term pardo started as a simple designation of colour, but expanded in significance to include a growing population having the classifications of preto (slave or ex-slave of African origin), or crioulo (slave or ex-slave born in Brazil), because these terms tended to freeze the social status of the slave or freed person. The emergence of a free population of African origin, not necessarily *mestiça*, but several generations removed from the more direct experience of slavery, consolidated the category of *pardo livre* as a necessary linguistic instrument to express the new reality, without imposing on it the stigma of slavery, but also without it losing the memory of slavery and the civil restrictions that it implied (Mattos 1998, chap. 5; Faria 1998, 138).

The expression 'pardo livre' signalled African slave origins, just as the designation of *cristão novo* (new Christian) signalled Jewish origins. This appears to be the case in the expression 'homem pardo', used in the Portuguese letter of introduction by D. Lourenço, who proudly proclaimed his royal African lineage. Lourenço is presented as a homem pardo in the only document written in Portuguese, perhaps not because he is of mixed origin, but because he had been born free, which perhaps eliminated the use of the label 'preto'.

Conclusion: Differences in racial identification in the Portuguese Empire

In Portugal, despite the persistence of slavery until the second half of the eighteenth century, mulatos and pardos did not identify themselves as being of a specific mixed origin in the brotherhoods of Lisbon. According to Lahon (2001, 521), information about the existence of pardos and mulatos in the Portuguese brotherhoods are so rare that one could imagine that they did not exist. And this was not because the concept did not exist. Many of the brotherhoods of Negroes imposed

restrictions on access of mulatos to their principal offices; and the elite brother-hoods imposed restrictions on purity of blood that increasingly affected mulatos from the seventeenth century onwards.

Long before scientific racism appeared as the doctrine in the nineteenth century, the Iberian Peninsula and Portugal in particular had developed a notion of race that was unique to it. It is worth returning to the *Vocabulário* of Bluteau (undated [1712], p. 86) to note that, in the early eighteenth century, the word race, when 'speaking of generations', 'always takes on an evil nature'. It was the possibility of social mobility of free descendants of African slaves in colonial Brazil, combined with this specific legal understanding of 'race', that provided the opportunity for a legal discussion about the conditions for absorption of these new subjects into the dominion of the Portuguese empire. These discussions about categories of classification would create in Brazil a new category of persons, the Free Pardos, who faced many restrictions but legally were far removed from the position of slaves.

In Angola, the designation of 'pardo' and 'mulato' would always be considered as a secondary reference category of identification. The mixed Portuguese-African elites tended, in one way or another, to re-Africanize into a creolized elite. The different role of slaves within the Portuguese Empire in part explains these differences (Alencastro 2000, 345-356). But it was not only where the new Atlantic slave order was not fully established that the categories of mixed origin for purposes of social identification were absent. The absence of the 'mulato' as a distinct category of identification is also an essential characteristic of the bipolar racial classification adopted in British America. Understanding these different processes requires an awareness of the dynamic interactions between slavery and law. In this respect, the pioneering analysis of Frank Tannenbaum in *Slave and Citizen* (1946) is of fundamental importance. Tannenbaum emphasized legal systems and the demographic impact of manumission as the basis for a comparative analysis of the process of building racial categories in the Americas. In *Slave and Citizen*, in contrast to Gilberto Freyre's classic *Casa Grande e Senzala* (1933), with which it is frequently associated, biological and cultural intermixing is considered an integral element of all the slave societies. For Tannenbaum, the system of racial classification should be considered as an outcome of the legal system of legitimation of slavery and the possibilities for moving between slavery and liberty that this allows, and not the contrary. Despite the static character of this proposition, which has been widely criticized, this inversion de-biologizes racial relations and sees them as historical and social constructions.

The predominant reading of Tannembaun's work emphasizes the author's perception of the difference between the status of the slave in countries with a Catholic tradition (principally Portugal and Spain, with France having an intermediate position), which were historically familiarized with slavery and which inherited, with adaptations, Roman jurisprudence on the issue, and that of the Protestant tradition, where the absence of that tradition reinforced the legal classification of the slave as a simple commodity, excluding them completely from any type of rights. The differentiation that existed within the Portuguese empire reinforces the criticism of this construction and its static nature. On the other hand, the very possibility of thinking about this differentiation within the Portuguese empire highlights the importance of subjecting the opposition of *slave* and *citizen* to a historical analysis of the construction of racial categories in the Atlantic world.

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Notes

1. 'Do ponto de vista social, o corporativismo promovia a imagem de uma sociedade rigorosamente hierarquizada, pois, numa sociedade naturalmente ordenada, a irredutibilidade das funções sociais conduz à irredutibilidade dos estatutos jurídico-institucionais' (Xavier and Hespanha, 1993:130).
2. '[...] faculdade plena e livre para invadir, conquistar, combater, vencer e submeter a quaisquer sarracenos e pagãos e outros inimigos de Cristo, em qualquer parte que estivessem, e aos reinos, ducados, principados, domínios, possessões e bens móveis e imóveis tidos e possuídos por eles; e reduzir à servidão perpétua as pessoas dos mesmos [...] (in: Soares 2000, 74-75).
3. From 1638 until the expulsion of the Dutch in 1654 the border between Portuguese and Dutch America, on the northeast coast, was established on the Rio Real, south of the mouth of the Rio São Francisco (Mauro 1991, p. 26).
4. Torre do Tombo National Archives (ANTT), Mesa de Consciência e Ordens, Codex 34, Book VII, fl. 95v.
5. According to this same Bluteau (undated [1712] p. 110), the use of the term in Portugal had Spanish origins. In Portugal, it would have '2500 infantry divided into companies of 250 soldiers each, which practice was soon considered impractical'. According to Puntoni (2002, 182-183), the Spanish 'tercio' was originally a paid and professional infantry regiment.
6. The *terço* is thus mentioned in the Royal Charter that gave him the rank of Mestre-de-Campo (Field Commander) of this terço, or regiment, on 20 March 1658 (Mello 1988, 53-54).
7. Mello (1988) and Dutra (1979:29) reach the same conclusion. According to Dutra, the Mesa de Consciência e Ordens stated this in writing, in an opinion unfavourable to induction of another black official, Domingos Rodrigues Carneiro, into the Order of Avis, around fifty years later.
8. ANTT, Livro de Portarias do Reino, Book 3, fo. 326, Microfilm 4253.
9. '... No tempo do governo de Castela, fique para quem se casar com sua filha Dona Guiomar e que para duas filhas que mais tem lhe faça Vossa Majestade tãobem mercê de dois hábitos para as pessoas que com elas casarem, com tenças com que comodamente possam achar soldados honrados que casem com elas ...'
10. 'Duzentos mil réiz de renda para seu sustento, e poder servir enquanto puder e que visto não ter filho, em que fique perpetuada a sua memória lhe faça Vossa Majestade mercê do foro [de fidalgo] para os maridos de suas filhas e que posto que tão grandes mercês são mais da grandeza de Vossa majestade que de seus merecimentos as pode esperar justamente a respeito das que se fizeram [...] a outras pessoas que não foram tão contínuos na guerra, nem tiveram tão bons sucessos nela como ele Henrique Dias teve'.
11. ANTT, Inventário do Livro das Portarias do Reino, Book III, pp. 148-149.
12. ANTT, Habilitação da Ordem de Santiago, Letra a, Maço 6, Doc. 1. Henrique Dias received the royal rank of Mestre-de-Campo do Terço da Gente Preta by Royal Charter, dated 20 March 1658.

AHU, Codex 116, p. 355. Full transcription in Mello (1988, 53-55).
13. Archives of Propaganda Fide, Rome, Scriture riferite nei congressi. Series on Africa, Angola, Congo, Senegal, Isole dell'Oceano Atlantico (1645-1685) [APF, SRNC, Series on Africa], fo. 486 (affidavit signed by Gaspar da Costa Mesquita, original in Portuguese, 1681), fo. 487 (affidavit signed by Giacinto Rogio Monzon – translation in Italian from Spanish original, 1682), fo. 488 (translation in Italian from affidavit of Gaspar da Costa Mesquita). All the documents cited related to the case of Lourenço da Silva Mendonça were personally consulted in the Archives of Propaganda Fide, based on the indications in the cited article by Richard Gray.
14. APF, SRNC, Africa Series, fo. 487 (1682).
15. APF, Scriture originale riferite nelle Congregazioni generali (SOCG), 490, fo. 140, 1684.
16. APF (SO C G), 495a, fo. 58, March of 1686.
17. APF, SOCG (490) fo. 392.
18. Ordenações Filipinas, Book IV, Chapter LXIII, cited from Lara (2000, 103-104).
19. 'Fallando em gerações, se toma sempre em má parte. Ter Raça [sem mais nada] vai o mesmo, que ter Raça de mouro ou Judeu. (Procura[richa], que os servidores da Misericórdia não tenhão Raça'.
20. Constituições Sinodaes do Arcebispado de Lisboa, 1656 (1640), Book I, Chapter XII, Dec. II$1 cited in Lahon (2001, 519, nota 80).
21. '... a toda pessoa, antes de entrar em algum ofício, se lhe mandem fazer informações a parte onde foi natural, com todas as circunstâncias com que fazem aos bacharéis antes de lerem, procurando-se se têm parte de cristão novo, mouro ou mulato, e se é bem infamado d'isso...'
22. AHU, Loose Documents. Capitania of Minas Gerais, box 7, doc. 26, 1726.

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