Atlantic Bridge, Atlantic Divide: Africans and Afro-Brazilians in Portuguese America

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(Working Paper 003)
Abstract
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This essay focuses on an aspect of persons of African birth and descent in colonial Brazil to which not sufficient attention has been paid by scholars. To the many factors—ethnicity, language, belief systems slavery, manumission and the circumstance of having been born free, slave or manumitted, and belief systems, and behaviors, which led to differentiations among persons of African birth or descent in the colony—place of birth played a crucial role in distinguishing Africans from Afro-Brazilians. This essay will briefly review relations between African- born and Brazilian- born of African descent and then focus exclusively on the presence in Brazil of persons born in Africa. I posit the hypothesis that some continued to live in accordance with African principles and practices and consciously and intentionally resisted assimilation into Luso-African-Brazilian or even Afro-Brazilian communities.

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Atlantic Bridge and Atlantic Divide: Africans and Creoles in Late Colonial Brazil.

From Cabo São Roque in Brazil to Cape Palmas in Liberia is approximately 1770 miles. The African continent is at its closest point to the American continent in regions between 16°N and 12°S from where the greatest numbers of slaves were transported to the Portuguese colony of Brazil during some 300 years. As measured in time, passage was between 35 and 40 days. Measured in cultural terms the distance between the two continents was very close. Photographs and accompanying texts in books by the late Pierre Verger attest not merely to the continuity but the virtual interchangeability of mores, rituals, and dress between inhabitants of the Bay of All Saints and the Bight of Benin. In terms of Portuguese governance of empire, exchanges between African colonies and Brazil were intense and enduring. Bishops of São Tomé and Príncipe often put into Salvador en route to their posting and governors-general and viceroys in Salvador were constantly preoccupied by political and economic developments in Central and West Africa and regarded Central Africa as part of their responsibilities in terms of providing an Atlantic shield against any attack which could weaken the Portuguese military position or disrupt commerce. Viceroy in Salvador maintained an extensive correspondence with the King of Dahomey. Exchange, inter-dependence, reciprocity and mutual concern characterized these relationships. Africans transported to Brazil and persons of African descent born in Brazil found a common point of reference in Africa. During the colonial period some few did travel from Brazil to Africa but the period from the mid 1830s to the 1890s witnessed the largest numbers of *africanos* (African-born blacks) and Brazilian-born persons of African descent returning to Africa (1).

The historiography has reflected the closeness of the relationship. If, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Brazilian historians, sociologists and anthropologists marveled at the strength of the African legacy to Brazil and emphasized evidence of survivals of African languages, rituals, ceremonies, and ethnic differences, more recent scholarship has turned to Africa itself as holding the key to an understanding of the African diasporas to Brazil and, more importantly, of the beliefs, values, mores, and rituals, of the *mentalités* of African-born and of those of African descent in Brazil. The
compilation of data bases about the trade has been complemented by demographic studies of the practices of slavery, of slave ownership, and of populations of slave, freed and free-born of African-birth and Brazilian-born of African descent. This has been complemented by a historiography which has reworked hitherto underused sources, discovered the treasures hidden in notarial registers and in inquisition records, and culled private and regional archives in Portugal and other European countries as well as Brazil to provide qualitative monographs and articles on topics as diverse as marriages, choice of partners, religious beliefs and rituals, values, priorities and slave agency (2). These studies have underlined the inappropriateness of referring to an African diaspora when, in fact any such monolithic notion must yield to the reality that there were many such diasporas, that these were in seriatum, and that they comprised not only an oceanic leg but terrestrial components on each side of the Atlantic. Several themes are constants in this revisionist historiography: ethnicity, identity, and diversity. The inexorability, duration, and volume of the slave trade provides a context for continuity and historians have been at pains to emphasize the ever-changing dynamic not only of the trade but of the context in Africa and the context in Brazil (3).

My purpose here is threefold: first, to emphasize the heterogeneity of the population of persons of African birth and descent in Brazil as measured not only by ethnic and cultural differences of African provenance but also by circumstances peculiar to the Americas; secondly, to single out for special attention relations between persons born in Africa and transported to Brazil and persons of African descent born in Brazil (crioulos); and, thirdly, to focus on a group which has not received the attention it deserves, namely persons born in Africa. A thread running through the essay is the quest for an explanation for the often tense relationship between Africans and Afro-Brazilians in colonial Brazil. If the waters of the Atlantic washed the shores of Africa and of Brazil, and made possible exchanges between the two continents, the ocean was also a constant reminder that it divided African-born from their descendants born in Brazil. The Atlantic was itself part of a dynamic of incorporation and of exclusion, of approximation but also of estrangement between peoples.

The population of persons of African descent in colonial Brazil evidenced a diversity attributable to circumstances peculiar to Africa and to America respectively.
Some indicators of diversity among African peoples are region- or even locality- specific: languages and dialects, religious beliefs and value systems, family organization and kinship relations, as well as forms of political entities and leadership, social hierarchies, and commercial practices, marketing and peddling. Most relevant to our understanding of differences among persons of African birth or descent in colonial Brazil and which can be traced to African antecedents are of an ethnic nature, languages, belief systems, mores, rituals, occupations and skills, and social hierarchies. While Africans transported to the New World shared some general cultural features, it was more likely that such points of reference were partial or over-lapping rather than being perfect matches, that some features were limited to a small group and not accepted by others, and that rivalries and hostilities present in Africa were part of that cultural baggage which accompanied Africans to Brazil. What differentiated Brazil from other parts of the Americas was that, such was the intensity, regularity, and duration of the various slave trades to and within Brazil, and the sheer numbers of those transported-- unmatched by any other single New World destination--was that African cultures were constantly being replenished and reinforced over three centuries. Such cultures reflected changes and an evolving dynamic internal to Africa and which would be brought to Brazil by each new cargo of slaves.

The Brazilian context contributed both to creating similarities (at least nominally or perceived as such by Portuguese settlers and crown representatives) between persons of African descent but also differences. Many were attributable to the institution of slavery, as it existed in Brazil. Often forgotten is that the spatial mobility associated with African slaves (within Africa and the Atlantic crossing) was equaled-- in terms of distance traveled-- by some Brazilian-born slaves who travelled by land and water within Brazil. With exceedingly rare exceptions, on arrival in Brazil all African-born were categorized (and stigmatized) as slaves and, as such, had bondage in common with many persons of African descent born in Brazil. This circumstance of being born a slave or being of slave parentage and thus a base (Portuguese: *vil*) person, regardless of the passage of several generations and manumission since slavery, led Portuguese settlers, elected municipal officials, crown representatives, and even the king to overlook legal distinctions between slave and free, differences of pigmentation between mulattos and blacks, and place of birth, and to pass or enforce legislation or impose punishments.
applicable to all persons of African descent (4). African slaves and Afro-Brazilian slaves sought freedom through flight and to escape brutal owners. All slaves, regardless of place of birth in Africa or Brazil had the potential to gain their freedom through manumission. Manumission of a newborn could be granted by an owner at baptism. For others, whether manumission was accomplished by self-purchase or slave substitution, through the intervention of a third party, through the good will of an owner during his or her lifetime, or by the terms of a will, carried overtones for the former slave as to how he or she was viewed by other persons of African descent in Brazil. Those who had bought their manumission with earnings accrued through their own labour often referred to this circumstance with justifiable pride. As was so often the case in Brazil, even freedom or slavery could be nuanced. The practice of coartação granted a slave conditional freedom/slavery but with absolute freedom only being granted once conditions mutually acceptable to slave and owner had been met. By the “law of the womb” (partus sequitur ventrem) a person of African descent was free at birth if his/her mother was free-born or manumitted. Finally, both African and Afro-Brazilian slaves could themselves be owners of slaves (5).

The other side of the same coin emphasized differences. Those selfsame monarchs, viceroys, governors, municipal officials and settlers were ultra-sensitive to perceived or real differences in behaviour between Minas and Angolans, to degrees of blackness or whiteness among slaves, to which slaves were more suited to certain types of labour, and which were reputed to have a greater propensity toward flight, revolt or disorderly and criminal conduct (6). Dancing in the streets by persons of African descent or birth was officially prohibited. But, in Rio de Janeiro, such activity was unofficially permitted because the majority of dancers were from Benguela and Angola and reputed to be of peaceful disposition. Portuguese officials and colonists often drew a distinction between a person born in Africa and a person of African descent born in Brazil. They were concerned lest an African-born person of noble or royal blood, or one respected for divinatory or healing powers in Africa, would, after transportation to Brazil, enjoy a similar position of prestige, influence, authority and even power among persons of African descent. This might be exercised under the guise of godparenthood. It was most clearly in evidence when fellow slaves cooperated in raising money to buy the freedom of
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a slave with these attributes. In 1719 in Minas Gerais a gubernatorial decree ruled that parish priests could only accept whites as godparents at weddings (7). This consciousness of place of birth was also reflected in how some owners, as a personal matter, favoured African or Brazilian-born slaves when deciding whom to manumit. Such a decision could be driven by business concerns, by whim or preferences, by the gender, age, and skill level of a slave, and by prevailing demographic, commercial and economic factors. Some were time- or region- specific. Overall, Brazilian-born slaves were more likely to be manumitted than African- born slaves; but manumission favoured African female slaves over African males; and African slave women were more likely than Afro-Brazilian slave women to earn their freedom. Brazilian-born slaves were preferred over African-born for training for specialist positions and managerial responsibilities on sugar plantations. As such, they were more likely to be manumitted than African field hands (8). The manner in which a slave earned his or her freedom awoke varying degrees or respect or opprobrium not among fellow African- or Brazilian- born and could be a point of contention. The dearth of white women in Brazil, even in some regions in the eighteenth century, led to inter-racial sexual couplings and offspring whose skin colour set them apart from African-born and from Portuguese, and could lead to multiple standards and expectations based on pigmentation. Among a lexicon of more than a hundred terms to describe such variants were some which had African frames of reference, for example de côr Fula (lit: “of the colour of the Fulah”). Words commonly used to describe skin colour were branco, pardo, and negro or prêto. Such words were “coded” in that each could carry a specific moral or physical connotation. Negro and mulato carried a derogatory connotation absent from prêto and pardo respectively. Mulattoes were frequently the butt of abusive language by blacks and whites alike who described them as lazy, dishonest, arrogant and disloyal. Colonists in Brazil and Portuguese officials also used a lexicon based on generic usage of African locations—Guinea, Angola, Mina—to distinguish between persons of African birth and descent with disregard for the niceties of ethnographical or geographical accuracy (9).

These circumstances, be they African or American, had ramifications for the physical and qualitative conditions of African-born and Brazilian-born persons of African descent in Brazil. The degree to which persons of African birth and descent were willing
selectively to forego or to adapt African belief systems, values, mores and behaviours to the dominant cultural norms imposed by the Portuguese was critical to their physical, moral and spiritual wellbeing in Brazil. From the African perspective, the best that could be hoped for was that African-born and Brazilian-born persons of African descent themselves were agents in identifying those facets of their cultures which, for them, were non-negotiable and those which they were willing to cede in whole or in part. Syncretism was one strategy by which African cultures and mores could be maintained, in which facets of African- and European-derived cultures were melded in such a delicate balance that Europeans did not view the African component—if they recognized it at all—as being offensive. For their part, African-born and persons of African descent would have a degree of freedom to act in accordance with their own values, belief systems, customs and mores. For slaves, at stake were not only their working conditions but also social and physical mobility, family stability, and eligibility for manumission. For a freed person of African descent (*liberto, alforriado, or forro*), the degree to which that person met criteria for social acceptability included linguistic competence in Portuguese, numeracy and literacy; participation in Portuguese institutions such as the militia and brotherhoods; spirituality as measured by regular participation in Catholic celebrations and charitable activities; achievement as measured by ownership of land, slaves, and property; occupation; financial assets; and stability as measured by marital status, period of residence in one place, and ownership of a house or shop. How each of these was “weighted”, and what role the perception of “quality of the person” played in determining whether such a person was deemed worthy of acceptance into Afro-Brazilian, Luso-Afro-Brazilian and Luso-Brazilian society was undefined, probably undefinable, and unrecorded.

A phenotype based on cognitive factors such as pigmentation, hair and physiognomy was inadequate because of the difficulty in reaching any consensus on such factors. Genealogy was less of a consideration for persons of African descent in Brazil than for Portuguese and their descendants where it could be critical. The exception were Africans who could point to a noble or royal genealogy, a circumstance which immediately vaulted them to the head of any community in terms of respect and deference among their fellow Africans. Ascription of a racial identity to a person was...
conditioned by time and place. It also depended on the eye of the beholder. In colonial Brazil, skin colour and even the “accident of birth”, to use a contemporary expression for a person of slave parentage, were negotiable. A person *de cor equivoca* or *escuro* could become *pardo* or even be “white to all appearances”(*ao parecer branco*) and thus eligible to hold public office notwithstanding decrees to the contrary. The Portuguese historian Nizza da Silva correctly observed that “*appearance* had practically the same weight as *being* in colonial society (10). In either case, Brazilian-born slaves and Brazilian-born free or freed persons held a substantial advantage over their African-born contemporaries.

This was not a case of “one size fits all”. There were variations depending on time and place, on settlers’ attitudes, on local crown officials’ interpretation of what was best for the region under their jurisdiction, on the prevailing economy and labour demands, on demography in general and, most significantly, on the ratio of whites to blacks and, among blacks, of the ratio of slave to free, of blacks to mulattoes, and whether any single African ethnic group (*nação*) predominated.

Place of birth was of critical importance in situating a person socially in Portugal and her overseas empire. A lexicon reflected this preoccupation. A person born and resident in Portugal was known as a *reinol* or *natural do reino*. This carried the implication that such a person was of Old Christian birth and descent and of white parentage on both sides for several generations. It did not apply to persons of Moorish descent born in Portugal who were referred to in Portuguese legal codifications variously as *mouros* or *escravos brancos*. In fifteenth and sixteenth century Portugal, slaves of African birth or descent had been initially referred to as *mouros negros*. This culturally specific term with religious associations gave way to the colour-based *negros* or *prêtos* to which might be added a geographical specifier (*e.g.*, *de Guiné*). There were euphemisms based on terms for variants of dark or dusky to offset the pejorative *negro*. The offspring of inter-racial couplings were known as *mulatos* (*derived from mulo* and the hybridity associated with mules)(11). In colonial Brazil, as elsewhere in the Portuguese empire, a Portuguese-born person was also known as a *reinol*. This term was often used in the context of charges of discrimination made by Brazilian-born who alleged that they were denied access to privileges, exemptions, or eligibility for public offices by a process which favoured Portuguese-born. Long-time Portuguese settlers in Brazil and Brazilian-
born persons of Portuguese ancestry were often referred to by contemporaries by the generic term *moradores* (12). Africans arriving in colonial Brazil were described and identified in documents by region of birth, port of embarkation, *nação*, or language group (Congo, Mina, Angola or Gege). But, to traders and owners, “fresh-water slaves” were generically regarded as black: *negros* or *prêtos*. These terms were also used to identify persons of African descent born in Brazil and generations removed from the Atlantic passage. Thus, an Afro-Brazilian slave might be known in common parlance as Pedro Congo. Other markers referred to Afro-Brazilians by skin colour (*negro, prêto, pardo, mulato*) by name, by parentage, by occupation or residence or, in the case of slaves, by the name of an owner or even by the name of an estate, farm, or plantation. The designation *africano* was peculiar to the nineteenth century and in the context of African slaves on a vessel bound for Brazil and captured during a time of British abolitionist pressure, and the human cargo subsequently freed. The term “creole” merits discussion because its genesis and subsequent history underlines the importance of the distinction between metropolis and colony. Derived from the Latin *creare* and Vulgar Latin *cria*, and possibly a colonial corruption of the diminutive form (*criadillo*) of the Spanish *criado*, it carried the connotation of being bred or reared and thence of a servant or slave. In the 1590s *criollo* was used to refer to Spanish born in the Spanish Indies. Later, in Spanish and English, it came to describe a person of European descent or of African descent born in or, more loosely, a long time resident of the Americas. In Portuguese, *crioulo* referred to a person born other than in Portugal. It was more commonly used in Portuguese Africa or Portuguese America to refer to persons of African birth or descent than to whites. An Angolan slave arriving in Brazil or Portugal was identified as a *crioulo de Luanda*. In Brazil, the word *crioulo* identified that person as being born in Brazil. Mobile Afro-Brazilians might carry further identification, such as *crioulo da Bahia* or *natural de Minas* with creole being understood and omitted as redundant. Whether used in Spanish, Portuguese, French, or English, the word ‘creole’ was applied to persons *déracinés* by virtue of having been born other than in the continent of their distant forefathers or by residence in colonies of European powers in Africa, the Americas and Asia. The word became less associated with the connotation of being in service or a
slaves. Association of being of African descent or of mixed racial parentage was not inherent to the use of the term. The term was not applicable to Native Americans (13).

From a metropolitan perspective, ‘creole’ suggested a distancing or remove from the mother country in continental Europe. This remove was spatial, human, physical, moral and spiritual. In political terms, the word served to underline the distinction between metropolis and colony, between the seat of royal power and the ideal of a dependant and subservient colony. There was the implication that, indeed, inhabitants of overseas Portuguese colonies existed primarily to be of service to the mother country in the production of creole raw materials to support the metropolitan economy and crown interests. There was the unflattering (to Brazilian-born descendants of Portuguese colonists and to descendants of African-born slaves) subtext that persons born in such colonies did not have that surfeit of moral, physical, and spiritual qualities with which native-born Portuguese were so amply endowed. The word also expressed the very real concern on the part of Portuguese kings lest colonists should get too big for their boots and, horror of horrors, aspire to be on a par with their metropolitan counterparts, or that Afro-Brazilians would press for privileges or exemptions hitherto granted to Portuguese colonists and their descendants. The English traveler and resident of Brazil Henry Koster referred to the “jealousy which existed between the two descriptions of white persons”, namely European and American-born, and observed: “The Europeans… look down upon the Brazilians, or rather they wish to consider themselves superior to them”. This attitude provoked continuing anti-Portuguese sentiment among creole brancos da terra after independence. In this they were joined by blacks and mulattoes, notably in Bahia. This was not an act of nationalist solidarity against Europeans. Rather, it reflected the feeling shared by some Africans and Afro-Brazilians that Portuguese and Luso-Brazilians were equally guilty of prejudice and discrimination towards Africans and Afro-Brazilians (14)

If, for European settlers, the distinction between reinol and crioulo was decisive, no less was there a divide between blacks born in Africa and persons of African descent born in Brazil. In each case, to be born in Portugal or in Africa respectively could bestow on that person considerable prestige in Brazil especially when a person was of noble family or, in the case of Africans, of royal lineage. African-born and Portuguese-born and Afro-Brazilians and Luso-Brazilians were acutely conscious of whether a person was
born in the Old or New World. This heightened sensibility was accompanied by heavy cultural baggage, a raft of perceptions, and distinctiveness creating social tensions which could erupt in violence. I will use the following terms to distinguish place of birth: Portuguese—white persons born in Portugal, Madeira and the Azores; Africans—blacks born in Africa and related islands and archipelagoes; Luso-Brazilians—persons of Portuguese descent on both sides born in Brazil; Afro-Brazilians—persons of African descent born in Brazil; Luso-Afro-Brazilians—persons of mixed race born in Brazil; and creoles—all persons, other than Native Americans, born in Brazil.

So sustained was the intensity of the slave trade over three hundred years that the presence of Africans in Brazil was not only assured but, by the eighteenth century, it has been claimed that African-born were the single largest sector of the population in the colony. This begs the question as to how many Africans were slaves or had earned their cartas de alforria and thus were part of the freed population. Notwithstanding the many studies of the slave trades—both oceanic and internal to Brazil—it is difficult to answer a key question: How many slaves in colonial Brazil at any given time were African-born as opposed to Brazilian-born? Data on slave imports are incomplete and late eighteenth-century censuses fail to distinguish between African-born and Brazilian-born slaves. Whether African or creole slaves predominated was location-, time-, and economy-specific. Inventories for slave holdings on sugar plantations in the northeast in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries provide conflicting data. Inheritance by Religious Orders and the Company of Jesus of estates probably skewed the slave force in favour of creoles and thus makes such farms atypical. In the captaincy of São Paulo, whereas in the eighteenth century Afro-Brazilians had predominated, from the 1770s through to the 1840s a heavy influx of Africans tilted the scales so that by 1840 Africans predominated. For the city of Rio de Janeiro in the eighteenth century and into the 1830s and 1840s, Sweet and Karasch suggest that African-born slaves predominated among the overall slave population. For Bahia in 1835, Reis noted that “a escravatura era majoritariamente estrangeira”. Whether a growing creole slave force in some places, such as Minas Gerais, and at certain times was attributable to vagaries of supply and demand in the slave trade—both oceanic and internal—or to reproduction, is difficult to determine(15). It may well be that fashions, exchange of information with fellow owners and personal
experience led a prospective purchaser to prefer one over the other. To these factors can be added the weighing in the mind of a prospective purchaser as to whether the skills and acculturation present in a creole merited the higher cost than for an African although, should the latter have commensurate specialist skills, the purchase of an African-born might represent a “good buy” (16). There was also a health factor. Diseases in Brazil to which Africans were more susceptible than creoles included tuberculosis and dysentery (*maculo*; possibly *schistosomiasis mansoni*; locally known as *mal-de-bicho*). A gamut of diseases to which Africans had less “defense mechanism” could result in mortality rates which were high initially and decreased as the slave became “seasoned”. A prospective owner would have to take into account that there was at least a 1 in 3 chance that a slave straight off the ship would be dead within three years from the time of disembarkation. Koster attributed the high mortality of slaves on plantations to impatient owners who rushed “salt water slaves” into heavy work. He recommended “seasoning” for a minimum of 8-10 months and preferably for a full year from time of arrival (17).

Africans were physically distinctive from the general population of persons of African descent in the colony because of cicatrizations, cuts, and tattoos. Filed teeth set Africans apart. These physical differences were documented by the German artist Johann Moritz Rugendas in drawings of African-born in rural and urban settings in nineteenth-century Brazil. African males also carried the scar of circumcision. Slaves from Angola bore the brand of the cross to show that they had been baptized and appropriate tax paid to the Royal Exchequor. Slave traders added their own brands. African males and females had hairstyles distinctive from creoles. Africans and Afro-Brazilians had some cooking practices and recipes in common but there were differences because of availability of foodstuffs: for example, ingredients in Angolan-made *vatapá* differed from those in the Brazilian version. Africans practised dietary restrictions and observed dietary taboos unknown to their creole contemporaries. There are eighteenth-century references to Angolans and slaves from the Costa da Mina in Brazil following Mbundu dietary restrictions (*kijila, quigila, quizila*) and not eating game, fish or shellfish *inter alia* on pain of being cursed. Karasch has noted how slaves suffered from malnutrition, but that those following an African diet were better nourished than those exposed to a Luso-Brazilian diet (18). Whereas some Africans were polyglots, and some languages were
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spoken widely within a cultural area, others were regional, and others purely local or
dialects intelligible only to those similarly endowed or with knowledge of cognate
language groups. There was the case of a Mina slave in eighteenth-century Minas Gerais,
referred to as an “escravo bugre”, who was unintelligible even to other Mina slaves. Such
linguistic barriers were recognized by Jesuit missionaries who studied African languages
the better to be able to preach the Gospel in Brazil to African slaves. Not only could
limited or esoteric linguistic capability result in some Africans being ineligible for
occupations which demanded knowledge of Portuguese but it denied them the essential
tool of communication to alter or better their condition. On the other hand, provided an
African-born’s day-to-day existence was predominantly in an African language speaking
context, that person could function with but a perfunctory acquaintance with Portuguese.
The Jesuit Antonil used the term ladino to refer (1711) to persons of African birth or
more usually descent who had a command of Portuguese and had adapted to Luso-
Brazilian culture. He opined that an African brought to Brazil as an infant or a Brazilian-
born slave was worth four boçais (slaves fresh off the boat) to an owner (19). For most
Africans, other than those transported to Brazil as young children, the linguistic barrier
was insuperable to a degree not experienced by Afro-Brazilians attuned to a form of
Portuguese since birth.

There is a long-standing tradition among immigrants to turn for support, advice,
or assistance to those who have immediately preceded them or to persons born in the new
land but who still wholly or partially maintain links with the lands of their ancestors. In
some cases, the cry for help by the newly arrived was answered. In other cases they were
vulnerable victims of ruthless exploitation by those who had preceded them. Clearly, a
distinction must be made between persons who emigrate of their own free will and those
who are forced or coerced into leaving their place of birth. While the intra-African phases
of capture and enslavement, be it in the initial rounding up, transportation to the coast,
corralling and sale for transportation, have been well documented and show the cruelty
inflicted by Africans and mulattos on the future slaves, there is minimal information on
the reaction by persons of African descent already in Brazil to Africans at the time of
dismarkation in Brazilian ports and in the immediate aftermath. Mattoso has referred to
“senior slaves” engaged in this process of adaptation, “resocialization” and integration of
salt-water slaves into Afro-Brazilian as well as Luso-Brazilian mores, behaviours and cultures. But the only reference I have found took the form of a royal order of 1702. In it the king recommended to the governor-general that *ladinos*, persons of African descent who had become acculturated through residence in Brazil but who also still had a command of native African languages, be used as interpreters and catechists for salt-water slaves. This proposal was rejected by the archbishop of Salvador and by prelates of the religious orders and does not appear to have been discussed by the secular authorities.

Karasch has an excellent description of slave arrivals in Rio de Janeiro in the early nineteenth century, but there is no reference to an African or Afro-Brazilian presence in this process other than in shaving heads and beards of the newly arrived. This action could have been taken for reasons of personal hygiene but, according to Marcos Magalhães de Aguiar, the cutting of someone’s hair or beard was a very strong symbolic act associated with humiliating or dishonouring that person. In the case of a newly arrived African such an act could have been a reminder that henceforth he would be subject to the control and whims of an owner (20). In fact, a more likely scenario was that, after purchase, owners and overseers would have intervened to prevent any such liaising or association until such time as they had asserted their own authority and power over their new acquisitions.

There is ample reason to believe that, on a one-to-one basis, Africans and Afro-Brazilians worked alongside each other amicably and there was social interaction, sexual coupling and stable personal relations between persons of each group. Africans and Afro-Brazilians, both slave and free, worked in commerce, marketing, agriculture, mining, ranching, construction, porterage and in the artisanal ‘mechanical trades’—and shared challenges and took advantage of opportunities. Female slaves, regardless of place of birth, were primarily engaged in domestic contexts (cooking; fetching water; cleaning; laundering, starching and ironing clothes; as seamstresses and weavers; and looking after children of their owners); as licensed or illegal peddlers or sellers (*negras de tabuleiro*) of cooked foods and drinks; and were concubines, mistresses, or prostitutes. Occupation was often linked to skills. On plantations creoles were more likely to be working in the “big house” or in managerial positions and African slaves as cane cutters or in menial and sometimes dangerous task. But there were instances of African slaves becoming mestres
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de açúcar. Africans (especially males) often did not reach the requisite level—semiskilled or skilled—to give them access to specialized occupations: one result was that they were used for heavy labour such as porterage or transporation; another was they did come to
develop a versatility of skills in meeting the requirements of a variety of occupations.
One skilled occupation in which male slaves (especially Angolans) were prominent was
that of “barber-surgeons” (barbeiros); some female slaves became licensed midwives. A
comparison of occupations of free and freed Africans and Afro-Brazilians in Bahia and
Minas Gerais shows little variation between the two groups (21). Both Africans and Afro-
Brazilians resorted to flight and were present in quilombos (22).

But there are also references in documentation as diverse as municipal records,
notarial registers, crown and viceregal correspondence, and gubernatorial decrees, in the
archives of brotherhoods of persons of African descent, and travellers’ accounts to attest
to tension between the two groups. Part of this was attributable to differing expectations
by owners of their slaves. Creole slaves were expected to meet higher standards of
loyalty, obedience, and responsibility. Koster noted that creole slaves “bear the yoke of
slavery with impatience” and that their discontent was aggravated by the high visibility of
free and freed creoles who served as a constant reminder of their own servile status. He
continued: “The Africans do not feel this [discontent], for they are considered by their
creole brethren in colour, as being so completely inferior, that the line which by public
opinion has been drawn between them, makes the imported slave feel toward the creoles
as if they had not been originally of the same stock”. Some creoles of African descent
despised Africans “fresh-off-the-boat” as primitive and untrained in the ways of the New
World. The word boçal referred to a “salt-water slave” or an African slave ”fresh-off-the-
boat”. It was used by white slave owners in Brazil to characterize newly arrived slaves as
being devoid of language skills in Portuguese and of culture, rough and clumsy and, by
extension, stupid(23). When used by creoles of African descent in Brazil to refer to
African slaves it carried much the same negative connotation but also that (from an Afro-
Brazilian perspective) the newly arrived slaves were primitive. In the mouth of an Afro-
Brazilian, boçal revealed the divide which Afro-Brazilians saw (or reassured themselves
existed) between themselves and Africans and was an expression of the creoles’ wish to
distance themselves from Africans. Koster distinguished between creole blacks and
creole mulattoes. He referred to “creole negroes” as a “numerous and valuable race of men”…. “a tree of African growth which has thus been transplanted, cultivated, and much improved by its removal to the New World”. He considered them “handsome persons, brave and hardy” who felt no uncertainty as to their identity because “creole negroes stand alone and unconnected with any other race of men”. This “impossibility of being mistaken for members of any other cast” had the effect of creole blacks feeling united to each other. But Koster ascribed to even free or freed mulattoes an ambiguity as to their identity “because of their connection with men who are in a state of slavery, and that many persons even of their own colour are under these degraded circumstances”. He concluded that mulattoes “always have a feeling of inferiority in the company of white men” (24). Unspoken was the possibility that, whereas on grounds of colour, mulattoes might feel inferior to whites but superior to Africans and to creole pretos, some of their antipathy toward creole blacks and Africans could be attributable to the mulattoes’ realization that not only was their position ambiguous in racial terms and even as regarded legal status but also that there was no single culture or language which they could call their own and which would have given them a cultural identity. Unambiguous was the fact that they were American-born.

The linguistic shortcomings I have described could make Africans objects of derision for Afro-Brazilians. This was part of a broader pattern of antagonism by Afro-Brazilians towards Africans. Afro-Brazilians took steps to lessen their being mistakenly identified as Africans. Afro-Brazilian slave women consciously dressed themselves, adopted hair styles, and wore jewellery not merely as indicators of status but also to distinguish themselves from African women. In early nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro, crioulas and mulatas wore mantillas to set themselves apart from African slaves (25).

There were examples of overt antagonism and public stigmatization by Afro-Brazilians of Africans as being untrustworthy (26). This attitude of Afro-Brazilians was shared by settlers and Portuguese officials. Official reaction was directed not only against African persons but against any object, ritual, or practice overtly African. That Africans spoke a variety of languages and even Arabic made Portuguese and Luso-Brazilians feel threatened and apprehensive, which could lead to a disproportional level of response. Three groups of Africans awoke mixed reactions among Afro-Brazilians and colonists of
Portuguese descent. These Africans must be considered in the context of Brazil as a place of convergence of different cultural traditions, rituals and skills. The line between mediation, communication, and healing was blurred but persons with these capabilities or skills were highly esteemed. Africans, Afro-Brazilians and even Portuguese sought out their services or intervention. While there were creole diviners and healers (calundeiros), Africans were held in higher regard. In the area of technical knowledge, Africans with knowledge of mining and metallurgy were especially prized. Fear and distrust was the other side of this coin. Diviners who could use their powers to request intervention by a god and even presence of a god or goddess at a ceremony, and healers whose modi operandi were based on spirit or human possession, were vulnerable to being stigmatized as malevolent feiticeiros practicing witchcraft and came to the attention of the inquisition as doing the work of the Devil. For their part, Minas and African slaves versed in gold mining and metallurgy were suspected of debasing gold dust and coins and duly punished by the civil authorities, but ascribed to them were special powers in finding gold (27).

Relations between Africans and Afro-Brazilians raise a set of (largely unanswered) questions. Was this antagonism towards Africans more keenly felt by free or freed Afro-Brazilians than by their slave contemporaries born in Brazil? Did Afro-Brazilian slaves have antipathy towards African slaves, or did the circumstance of being slaves create bonding, regardless of place of birth? What role did gender play in such relationships? Did Afro-Brazilian slave women have empathy for African slave women? To what factor or combination of factors should the historian attribute the preference for endogamy among Africans in the choice of a partner in marriage, which will be discussed later? That tensions and even antagonism existed between Africans and Afro-Brazilians, and that these were played out in their public and in their private lives and spaces, there is no doubt. Two European travelers to early nineteenth-century Brazil commented perceptively on the relationship between creoles and Africans. The French botanist Auguste de Saint-Hilaire wrote of his conversation with an African slave who remarked that creole women despised blacks from Costa da Mina and that the feeling was reciprocated. Creoles tended to marry creoles rather than having mixed marriages. Koster noted the existence of a “line which by public opinion has been drawn” between Africans and creoles (28). The written record substantiates place of birth as setting Africans apart
from Afro-Brazilians. Further research is necessary for historians to have some measure by which to weigh place of birth against such physical factors as age, colour and gender and cultural factors such as religion, language skills and ethnicity, and tease out the components in the motivation for the antagonism and antipathy between Afro-Brazilians and Africans.

This distrust and antagonism played out in an institutional framework. Most officers and probably the preponderance of soldiers of the regiments of the Henriques, were Afro-Brazilians: some had been born free, others manumitted. Of the five persons of African descent who distinguished themselves against the Dutch in Pernambuco and Salvador, and were awarded knighthoods in the Order of Christ and Order of Santiago, all were born in Brazil. In late colonial Salvador, officers of the Henriques were integrated into a network of an Afro-Brazilian elite which included members of governing bodies of black and mulatto Catholic brotherhoods and the more prominent black and mulatto artisans. To be a soldier in a militia regiment, or certified in a ‘mechanical trade’ and thus eligible to practice one’s trade in one’s own shop, or an elected member of a brotherhood (which included female participation and office-holding), bestowed social prestige on that person among his/her contemporaries of African descent. In Minas Gerais, tradesmen were well represented among soldiers in *pardo* militia regiments. Africans were not formally excluded by decree or statute, but such formal exclusion would have been redundant. The social reality was that they were far less likely than were creoles to have the requisite qualifications to make them eligible and, if they were eligible, they did not have access to the social network in the Afro-Brazilian community whose support and trust they would have needed to become full participants in guilds or militia companies. In fact, in 1756 the creoles of the regiment of the Henriques in Salvador petitioned the king protesting the establishment of a regiment of the Henriques in Pernambuco. This was because the Pernambucan regiment was made up of Minas whom the creoles disparagingly referred to as being an “infecta nação” and untrustworthy. Even in collective cultural activities-- participation as singers, instrumentalists or even conductors in choral groups or at celebrations to honour a crown judge or governor-- and which involved musical divertissements and even operas, the performers were usually mulattos or creoles (29).
The absence of a support network and of skills which would have facilitated integration had other ramifications. The proclivity for and incidence of resorting to flight was higher among African than Afro-Brazilian slaves. The motivation varied. Africans were more likely to flee as individuals and not as family groups as was often the practice of creoles seeking to preserve a relationship or the integrity of a family unit. Africans were especially prone to flight during the brutal “seasoning” period when they would be subject to severe punishment to break their independent will until they showed obedience and conformed to an overseer’s or owner’s wishes. But Africans’ incidence of success was substantially lower for reasons already discussed: lack of language skills; lack of familiarity with prevailing customs; and lack of contacts to give them access to information, a support network, and “safe” houses. The absence of a support system was critical. There was no guarantee that they would be accepted into a quilombo other than as slaves. Africans might form a short-lived and small calhambola but here again their lack of “savvy” made them more vulnerable to capture than creoles.

Lack of acculturation, lack of skills, and lack of familiarity with “the system” also led overall to Africans being less likely than Afro-Brazilians to be manumitted. Place of birth was but one factor in a highly complex series of considerations which included the occupational context, gender, age, and health of a potential manumittee. In cities and towns of colonial Brazil, that they were largely unskilled made African males less useful to an owner other than for untrained heavy labour. This could lead owners to rent them out as escravos de ganho. One activity in which African male slaves were prominent was in porterage: teams (cantos) of four or six slaves were hired out as a work gang. Contemporary iconography records them carrying enormous barrels suspended from poles born on their shoulders. But among African women in urban and rural settings in Brazil, the combination of skills derived from their multiple roles in Africa—reproduction, responsibility over all domestic matters, planting and harvesting of crops, marketing, and even some as members of womens’ trading societies-- made them not only desirable for labour but also in vending and marketing activities at the behest of an owner and to which some brought experience of leadership, organization and requisite skills in negotiation. The seamy side of such activities by female slaves was that they might be forced by an owner to engage in prostitution or in marketing activities which
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were illegal, including contraband and black market activities. When arrested by municipal authorities, owners feigned ignorance of such irregularities. By the unsupervised nature of their domestic duties, female African slaves had greater opportunities than their male counterparts to interact with Afro-Brazilian slaves in definable locations such as the fountain, well or river when getting water, in areas designated for washing clothes, and in the market place. As such, they had greater potential access to information and were part of an informal African and Afro-Brazilian communication network which could be invaluable to them in acquiring the wherewithal to make an offer to an owner but also in negotiation over manumission. Be they male of female, African slaves faced major challenges in colonial Brazil. Some were attributable to their “outsider” status vis-à-vis the Afro-Brazilian slave community and to the fact that they had fewer integrative institutions and vehicles available to them. The strong bond known as malungo which developed among slaves transported on the same vessel may also have served to isolate Africans from other persons of African descent in the colony (30). Yet to be determined is the degree to which slaves newly disembarked in Brazilian ports became part of a group of forced immigrants of African birth who, regardless of ethnic or tribal origins, formed a common bond between themselves separate from the Brazilian macrocosm which included Afro-Brazilians as well as Portuguese and Luso-Brazilians (31). Historians have tussled with the challenge to ascertain how Africans identified themselves prior to transportation to the New World, what changes as to how they saw themselves or in relation to others may have occurred during the passage, and how they identified themselves or were identified by others after disembarkation in a Brazilian port and subsequently(32).

Religion has the potential for providing a physical and spiritual meeting place not only for like-minded persons but for those from disparate ways of life. For Africans and Brazilian-born persons of African descent, religion provided solace and strength. The sacred town of Ile-Ife was the ceremonial centre for the Yoruba religion which gave a religious and cultural identity to hundreds of thousands of Africans transported from Central Africa to Brazil. Others were adherents of Islam. Especially in Bahia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Muslim slaves saw themselves—and were seen by others—as a community apart from the general slave population. They were readily
identifiable by their behavior, meeting for prayer and to study the Qur’an, by the wearing of finger and thumb rings of iron or silver, by the contents of the pouches they carried, and by their dress and appearance. For them, Islam was so central to their identity that this transcended differences of places of origin and tribal and linguistic differences as markers of identity. And still others were adherents of a variety of African traditional religions. Some Africans, notably in Congo and in Angola, had been exposed to some form of Christianity, but to see these as being specially selected for transportation to America requires a leap of faith (33). Mass baptisms in Africa prior to embarkation did not bestow an instant understanding of Christian dogma, beliefs, or rituals. In fact, they probably spurred fear or total confusion in recipients. The intensity of the trade guaranteed the continuation of this sorry state of affairs. African slaves who had come to Brazil as children or who wished publicly and spiritually to affirm their commitment to Catholicism might choose to be baptized as adults. Owner indifference and oversight led to a failure to baptize many Brazilian-born slaves (34). Regardless of whether an African indigenous religion, Islam or Christianity was exclusively present, or co-existed in the same person in equally strongly held but distinctive faiths, or in syncretic formulations or reformulations, religion was inalienable from African cosmology, rituals, cultures, kingship and lineages, and permeated into value systems and behaviours(35). The African component of religious rites and beliefs in Brazil and the degree to which these were forerunners of candomblé and other African and Afro-Brazilian religions in Brazil remains speculative prior to the late eighteenth century, as too does the degree of participation of Africans in rituals and ceremonies exclusive to them. An inquisition record of the 1680s refers to African religious rites in Bahia and there are documented cases for the second half of the eighteenth century in locales as remote from each other as Recife (Pernambuco) and Itaubira (Minas Gerais) of clandestine worship by Africans of African deities with African rituals and in accordance with African beliefs, and with African priests or priestesses in houses specifically dedicated to such practices (36). First generation Americans, namely creole children of slave parents both of whom were African-born, were more likely than African-born persons to be touched by the Catholicism. Even more was this likely to be the case of offspring of mixed marriages in which one partner (slave, free or freed) was Afro-Brazilian. Whether exposure to
Catholicism led to an understanding and adherence which was substantive or nominal depended on the individual circumstances. One such individual was Catarina Gonçalves de Miranda. An African-born slave she had been manumitted and lived in the hamlet of Pinheiro in Minas Gerais. In 1774, already well advanced in years, she pressed charges of slander against a pardo lieutenant who had publicly called her a whore, thief, and witch (feiticeira). Of these insults, that which most offended her was to be called feiticeira because this was tantamount to questioning her faith as a Catholic(37). For Catarina, as for many Africans in Brazil, her Catholic faith was very precious to her. But for the Brazilian-born pardo lieutenant she was African and thus associated with witchcraft.

There is no indication for the colonial period that Africans differed from other persons of African descent in the colony in their veneration of Our Lady of the Rosary and Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte and saints such as Santa Efigênia, São Benedito (St. Benedict the Moor), Santo Elesbão, Santo Antônio de Catagerona, Sãó Balthazar, and São Gonçalo. Some saints may have resonated more than others with African beliefs and were simply incorporated by Africans in Brazil as yet another charm to bring good fortune and ward off evil whereas creoles would have been less likely to see an image other than as a Catholic saint. Some saints themselves were associated with persecution and physical duress and thus were thought to be made empathetic to the conditions of slaves in Brazil(38). Our Lady of the Rosary came to be associated by Africans with Iemanjá, goddess of the sea. The words “reverence” and “veneration” may be inappropriate to describe an embrace by Africans of such saints and even of the Virgin Mary which did not merely border on the physical but was carnal and even sexual. In Portugal there were precedents for this carnalization and even sexualisation in the veneration for and depiction in carved statues of Nossa Senhora do Leite and of Nossa Senhora do Ó. This veneration was tantamount to the inclusion of a saint within the African family with human character traits and physical attributes, strengths and shortcomings. To see black saints on an altar in a chapel of a brotherhood of Afro-Brazilians to-day purely in terms of their being painted black is to miss entirely that these statues transcend iconographic or physical depiction. For their worshipers they are not remote or ethereal but readily accessible. Instead they are seen as representations of a person of flesh and bone, imbued with human strengths and weaknesses and considered
as members of their family. Actions, words, and deeds which were sacrilegious, blasphemous, or tantamount to verbal acts of desecration when viewed from a strictly Catholic perspective become less symptomatic of rejection of or attack on Christianity when considered in what might almost be a familiar but definitely profane context which co-existed with the sacred. In colonial Brazil, persons of African descent--regardless of place of birth, legal standing or skin colour--were motivated to establish brotherhoods whose statutes and functions were closely modeled on those in Portugal. Dominican missionaries promoted the veneration of Our Lady of the Rosary and the crown was supportive of the creation of brotherhoods of blacks in Portugal. As John Thornton has shown, a Christian component to religion was present in the Kongo and elsewhere at an early date. Some Africans may have been aware of brotherhoods created by Catholics for spiritual and charitable ends because there was a brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary in São Tomé in 1526 and elsewhere in Portuguese-influenced Africa by the end of the sixteenth century (39).

In colonial Brazil brotherhoods were instruments for both integration and exclusion of Portuguese and Luso-Brazilians or of Africans and Afro-Brazilians. At least 35 brotherhoods were dedicated to Our Lady and different saints venerated by individuals of African birth and descent in colonial Brazil. Some brotherhoods were local whereas others had affiliates colony-wide. In the captaincy of Minas Gerais alone at least 62 branches of Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Pretos have been identified (40). Some, notably those of Our Lady of the Rosary in Minas Gerais, admitted all persons of African birth and descent, free, freed, and slave, and also whites. In Salvador, brotherhoods of the Rosary varied between inclusiveness and exclusiveness (41). Other brotherhoods of persons of African birth or descent were more exclusive and had criteria which included ethnic, social and even economic requirements for candidates for admission. Some excluded slaves. Some were along colour lines--pardos, mulatos, and negros, but with cultural overtones and distinguishing between Africans and crioulos. Other brotherhoods limited their membership to African-born or to Brazilian-born. The statutes of the brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Blacks in Iguaraçu admitted only blacks, while acknowledging that these could be African- or Brazilian-born. The brotherhood dedicated to Our Lady of Guadelupe, established in Olinda in 1627 admitted only pardos. These
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could be slave or free but, *ipso facto*, African-born were effectively excluded. Still other brotherhoods required potential members to meet ethnic or linguistic requirements. In Salvador the brotherhood of Senhor Bom Jesus das Necessidades e Redenção was limited to Gege (from Dahomey) and the brotherhood of Nossa Senhora da Boa Morte to Nagô (as Yoruba speakers were known in Bahia) of the Ketu nation. In Cachoeira in the Bahian Recôncavo the Confraria do Senhor Bom Jesus dos Martírios had a pronouncedly Gege membership. Congos might have one church, Angolans another, and Afro-Brazilian blacks yet another (42). Or all three groups might have their own altars or chapels within the same church. These examples of the gamut of degrees of inclusiveness or exclusion do not answer the specific question of whether or not there were instances of the creation of brotherhoods in colonial Brazil by Africans and exclusively for an African-born membership. My inclination would be to believe that there were not. Instead, more common was the practice of allocating administrative positions between Africans and creoles with the proviso that only free-born or manumitted persons could serve on the governing board (*mesa*). Election to the *mesa* of the Brotherhood of St. Anthony of Catagerona in Salvador was limited to creoles and blacks born in Angola. For Minas Gerais, Kiddy has noted the “high presence” of *crioulos* in leadership positions in brotherhoods. Not only did such brotherhoods provide opportunities for leadership by persons of African birth and descent but they also served as a cushion to decrease tension between different sectors of the population of African birth and descent in colonial Brazil and not least of which was between Africans and Afro-Brazilians. Furthermore, in brotherhoods of Africans and Afro-Brazilians to a markedly higher degree than was the case in their white counterparts, women were prominent numerically and had considerable influence(43)

Exclusivity did lessen the potential for conflict between different factions, be these based on differences of skin colour, language, ethnicity, place of origin, or legal status. Relations between branches of the Brotherhood of Nossa Senhora das Mercês, an often exclusive bastion of *crioulos*, and branches of the Brotherhood dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary, which usually had a liberal admissions policy, could be tense. Vila Rica was exceptional in having two branches of each brotherhood within the town. There were various schisms between the two branches of the Mercês and between the branches
of the Mercês and the more established and prestigious brotherhood of the Rosary. In 1763 the Mercês de Baixo expelled two female slaves on the grounds that their admittance had contravened a statute forbidding membership to anybody from Guiné and Luanda. This was the opening salvo in a contentious and protracted dispute with the Brotherhood of the Rosary of the Alto da Cruz, also in Vila Rica. In their petitions to the crown, brothers of the Mercês insisted on identifying themselves as *crioulos*. In this, they were setting themselves apart from not only Africans but also *pardos*, the latter sometimes being admitted as brothers (44). The Brotherhood of the Mercês in Sabará refused admission to all Africans (*Etíopes*) and restricted membership to “crioulos de cor preta nacionais do reino e conquista de Portugal”. It admitted males who were natives of the Island of São Tomé on the grounds of being “similar to us” and African-born women (45). The Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of Blacks (Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Prêtos) in the diamond mining encampment of the Tijuco numbered both creoles and blacks as members. In 1771, after using words “less than decent, calling this brotherhood one of negroes” the creole brothers forsook the Brotherhood of the Rosary and incorporated themselves as the Brotherhood of Nossa Senhora das Mercês. Their request to return to the chapel of the Rosary was denied by the blacks “because inevitably either because of hatred or strong feelings of animosity, they could never be united and there would be continual wrangling between us Blacks and those creoles”. The statutes of Nossa Senhora das Mercês did allow for admission of “all quality of individuals, even black slaves natives of the Coast of Guinea”. This was challenged by creole members but they were over-ruled by the local magistrate (*ouvidor*) who judged in favour of the admission of blacks. The creole brotherhood of the Perdões in Vila Rica was also the object of magisterial displeasure for opposing the admission of African-born. Other branches of Mercês were more flexible in their admissions policies as brothers but did insist on members of the governing body being *crioulos*. Such admissions policies varied by period and location(46).

These actions by the creole brothers and their evident intent to distance themselves from Africans can also be seen from a different perspective: namely, the cloak of Catholic orthodoxy in which they swathed themselves and their rejection of any association with, or the remotest taint of, what for them (Afro-Brazilians), had become
pagan beliefs or rituals practiced by Africans whom they now regarded as primitive. In 1765 the Confraria do Senhor Bom Jesus dos Martírios of the town of Cachoeira in the Bahian Recôncavo made a petition to the Mesa da Consciência e Ordens in Lisbon requesting approval of its statutes. This request was opposed by the ecclesiastical authorities in Salvador who alleged that the African-born brothers of the Gege nação “have been plucked out of the paganism existing in Africa and always have a propensity for the superstitious”. Some 15 years later, this time in Recife, similar charges of profane practices were levied against black brotherhoods, whose membership was heavily Mina. It was alleged that some brothers—concurrently with the festival of Our Lady of the Rosary—were secretly worshiping pagan deities with rites more associated with African traditional religions than with Catholicism. It is not clear whether the outrage was provoked by desecration of the festival in honour of Our Lady, and thus also an affront to the brotherhood of which they were members, or to the fact that they were engaging in the worship of pagan deities (47). But these examples show that brotherhoods whose membership was predominantly or exclusively of Africans or along ethnic lines were more vulnerable to charges or perceptions of being suspect in terms of Catholic orthodoxy.

So far my discussion has focused on the population in Brazil of persons of African birth and descent. That this was not monolithic has been emphasized by reference to fault lines between different groups and with special attention to the importance of continent of birth. This has provided the opportunity to highlight the importance of a sector of this population—African-born—which has not been as closely studied as it deserves. We have seen that relations between Africans and Afro-Brazilians ran the gamut from open antagonism and hostility to varying degrees of cooperation. Africans and Afro-Brazilians worked out a modus operandi based on recognition that there was a degree of inter-dependence and that mutual tolerance was essential if they were to co-exist. But there are indications that, among the millions of Africans transported to Brazil over three centuries, some were not signatories, as it were, to this unwritten and unspoken pact of mutual understanding and convivência. Whether it was in reaction specifically to Afro-Brazilians, to Luso-Portuguese, to slavery, to deprivation, poor health, ennui and hopelessness, or a sense of isolation, Africans found ways to withdraw. They fled.
lost the will to live and slowly wasted away. They committed suicide by drowning, hanging, poisoning, and swallowing their tongues. A mother might kill herself and her unborn child to spare the child from a life of slavery. Drowning and hanging from a tree might reflect African beliefs associated with being united with ancestors. One cause of death was banzio or nostalgia for their homeland (48).

There were also Africans who opted for life. Perhaps they realized that there was another way to assuage their banzio and fulfill the desire to “go home” to Africa. They chose another form of withdrawal. They rejected assimilative pressures and consciously opted to remain separate from, rather than to be integrated into, the general population of persons of African descent. This minority opted to live, as far as was possible in colonial Brazil, by a set of shared principles based on African values and belief systems and in accordance with customs, behaviours, and personal relationships in a cultural context which was African albeit in an American setting (49). Such a decision lay with the individual. For some, the desire to remain separate from the general population of persons of African descent may have been born of the hostility of Afro-Brazilians towards them. For others, so devastating was separation from natal kin that they were too traumatized to confront the challenge of creating new relationships and a network of fictive kin (50). For still others it may have been a response to what they perceived to be insurmountable barriers to integration into a society of persons of African (Afro-Brazilian, Afro-Luso-Brazilian) descent in the colony or hopelessness imposed by the circumstance of being slaves and lacking the instruments to gain their freedom. Some may have recognized the stark reality that a letter of manumission afforded no guarantee of survival or bettering of their condition. And, for some, the decision was the fruit of a conscious rejection of the New World and a decision to continue to live, as far as was possible in Brazil, in the manner to which they had been accustomed: namely, according to African and not creole (Luso-Brazilian, Afro-Brazilian, or Afro-Luso-Brazilian) values, belief systems, personal relationships, and in their dress and behaviours. The ramifications of this decision played out in various ways. Some Africans used strategies or practiced behaviours which underlined how they saw themselves as apart from the population of persons of African descent in Brazil. Language and naming practices are clear indications as to how a person identifies him or herself and also how he or she
wishes to be identified by others. Use of African languages was a consciously made individual decision but public statement as to how Africans distinguished themselves from Afro-Brazilians. So too was their use of African names in addition to names imposed on them by overseers or owners. Mothers gave African names to their children. Etiquette, and the ritual exchanges of gifts, or the Kongo practice of exchanging snuff, between Africans in Brazil also emphasized their distinctiveness. Some used the gesture of greeting associated with Kongo (right hand raised and palm exposed; left down and palm concealed). Others carried this “crossroads gesture” or a cross painted red and black as a talisman. Portuguese and Africans alike had a propensity for carrying on their bodies or wearing around their necks little pouches (bolsas) whose contents were regarded as bringing good luck or protecting the wearers from physical or spiritual harm. Amulets worn by Africans were talismans. Some had religious importance associated with traditional African religions or might contain verses from the Koran and Islamic prayers. While the external appearance of bolsas did not distinguish Africans from Afro-Brazilians, the contents might do so. Dress and ornamentation is no less a form of communication than language. African women dressed themselves and ornamented their bodies in ways which set them apart from Afro-Americans. But, unlike the spoken language which immediately and readily identifies the speaker by origin or culture, dress and ornamentation have the potential to be a coded medium of communication understood only by those to whom it is specifically addressed and usually of the same cultural area. The knotting of a headscarf was a marker indicating, for those privy to the code, the status of a woman (single, married, widowed). For Central Africans, the combination of colours of beads worn around the neck could indicate of which orixá she was the ‘daughter’. There is less evidence to show that African men adopted a dress or wore bodily decorations which would serve as cultural markers. Paintings by Carlos Julião, miniatures by Guillobel, and engravings by Rugendas depicted African artifacts, baskets and mats, cuisine, string and percussion instruments, and Africans engaged in song and dance and various occupations (51). This is a timely reminder that, while some practices and behaviours were peculiar to Africans, others were shared by all persons of African descent in Brazil.
The distinction lies in the intent. Whereas for Afro-Brazilians, such practices or behaviours could be the fruit of collective memory or of traditions handed down across several generations and which had taken on iconic or symbolic status, for Africans these were intensely personal markers associated with self identity and expressions of a decision to create their own cultural space apart from other persons of African descent in a New World. The theme of intention merits further enquiry, and nowhere more so than in the context of overt resistance. Slave uprisings in Bahia between 1807 and 1835 were characterized by the high representation of African-born slaves and correspondingly low participation by Afro-Brazilian slaves. Did the motivation among African slaves derive from resistance to the institution and practices of slavery, to a desire for flight, or to a rejection of creole culture in general and the assertion of their vision of themselves as Africans?(52). I would like to dwell on this last point. As there was no single African diaspora, neither was there a single monolithic Africa but one in constant change, reformulation, and revision. Recently, James Sweet, emphasizes how Africans used African ritual practices and beliefs and explores “core beliefs” in the context of religious practices (53). While there was permeability between belief systems and organizing principles, for example a sense and practice of hierarchy present in social and political life, in lineage, and in rituals and which transcended ethnic and linguistic differences and was common to more than one cultural areas in Africa, my discussion here is limited to three specific aspects of African society and culture. The first is respect. In Africa respect was accorded to political elites, to religious leaders, to rain-makers, to healers, and to diviners. Seniority, as measured by a variety of criteria, was also central to African political cultures. One such criterion was age. The elderly enjoyed positions of leadership and authority based on their position in age-based hierarchies. Two other criteria were the principle of precedence and authority bestowed on first comers to a region. Status could also be accorded by occupation, with persons working in metal crafts in general and blacksmiths in particular in West and Central Africa enjoying a special status. The second concerns kinship. In Africa, kinship was an instrument to acquire authority and gain resources. African societies reflected a seemingly endless number of variants of excruciating complexity of reproductive and kinship forms. Great importance was given to family formation and to kinship based on affinity as much as consanguinity. Women
played important roles for their reproductive capabilities of increasing the lineage, extending kin networks, and contributing to the wealth of a leader as measured by dependents and those who owed service. The third concerns the submergence of the individual to the interests of the group. Thus did kinship prescribe roles and expected behaviour for each individual to benefit the group. Many religious beliefs and practices were oriented as much to the whole society as to the individual. Both magic and witchcraft could be used legitimately or illegitimately depending on whether the motivation lay in the public interest or self interest. Both found expressions in ritual: animal sacrifice to strengthen bonds between humans and deities; initiation ceremonies to celebrate entry into adulthood with increasing communal responsibilities; and the wearing of amulets to ward off evil spirits, solve communal problems, or provide invulnerability for an individual in battle. The three characteristics of African societies, cultures, and values I have highlighted were not so evident among Afro-Brazilians(54). Creoles put enormous store in kinship networks, but they could not appreciate the devastation experienced by an African on being torn from the cocoon of natal kinship (55). Is it possible that an explanation for differences and antagonisms between creoles of African descent and Africans in colonial Brazil may lie in deeply rooted and deeply held convictions and principles present in Africa and not in the Americas? In other words, there was a disconnect. If, for Africans arriving in Brazil, these were inherent to their very ethos, for Afro-Brazilians such tenets were a more distant memory and, with subsequent generations, increasingly part of an orally transmitted history.

Generational change is central to my hypothesis. My discussion has focused on that generation of persons born in Africa and transported to the New World. No reference has been made to the next generation, namely their offspring born in Brazil. This is, in part, attributable to demographic data for what was—even in the latter part of the eighteenth century-- largely proto-statistical. While there are references to creoles of African descent, only exceptionally is it possible to establish whether an Afro-Brazilian in question is American-born in the first, second or later generations. Registers of births or marriages, letters of manumission, wills, and notarial records of purchases, sales or transfer of ownership of properties, or formal complaints against erstwhile business partners, family members or neighbours provide occasional insights.
A compelling public expression of private intent is the selection of a partner in marriage. This raises the question as to whether in colonial Brazil an African consciously selected as a partner another African-born rather than an Afro-Brazilian. There were circumstances which militated against such an option. The sex ratio in the oceanic trade has been estimated variously at 2:1, 3:1 or 3:2 in favor of males over females. Thus, the greater the volume of the trade at any time, the greater the disproportion between males and females and the less likely the prospect of an African finding an African female for marriage. In the various intra-Brazilian trades, Africans predominated. But the vagaries of the trades did have an impact on the numerical relationship between African and creole slaves in the population in any given region and influence the process of selection of a partner. Manolo Florentino and José Roberto Góes posit convincingly for a correlation between a *taxa de masculinidade* and a *taxa de africanidade*. This varied by period, by region, between rural and urban areas, by the fluctuations in the prevailing economy, and even in accordance with the size of the slave holdings of an owner. Over the colonial period there were instances of a 90 per cent male predominance among some slave holdings (for example in the mining areas in the first third of the eighteenth century) and, on the other hand, a narrowing of the sexual ratio to approximate a balanced sexual equilibrium among slaves with the same owner. For Minas Gerais, Mariana Dantas has traced demographic changes occurring in slave holdings in Sabará: data for the years 1750-75 show that African male slaves (aged 15-60) predominated; that there was a gender ratio favoring males over females by 7:1; and that male children under 15 and females under 14 made up less than 1 percent of African slaves. She finds an emerging presence of Brazilian-born slaves in the same period among whom the gender ratio was 3:1 and children made up 58 percent of such slaves. By the end of the century, Dantas uses inventories which show that, a significant increase among African-born slaves notwithstanding, the gender ratio between African-born slaves remained about the same. There was a large percentage increase among Brazilian-born slaves but, in this group, males outnumbered females by a mere 2 percent. The captaincy of São Paulo followed a different trajectory. From 1777 to 1829 there was an enormous influx of African slaves. The result was a substantial increase in the ratio of male to female slaves which distorted the age and sex ratios for Africans (56).
The availability of an African-born partner was, to a large degree, serendipitous and, demographically, the chances of finding such a partner were lessened by a small pool of female African-born slaves. Even if an African partner were to be available, there was no guarantee that an owner would approve such a union. Furthermore, it was common practice for an owner to deliberately have slaves of different provenance: Africans of different ethnic groups; and Africans and creoles. This militated against Africans finding a potential partner from the same cultural area in Africa from among slaves in a household. It is difficult to assess what role—if any—the following considerations played in the choice of a partner. Experience showed that African women were more susceptible to diseases present in Brazil than were their creole counterparts. There is evidence to suggest that slave women were more likely than were free or freed women of African descent to have children out of wedlock, but here again there is no study on whether such slave women were African or creole. And here it should be noted that illegitimacy carried no stigma. Generally, it has been thought that creole women bore their first child at about age 20 whereas Africans bore their first child 2 years later. New information suggests that these ages should be revised with creole slave women bearing their first child between 14 and 17 years old and Africans between 16 and 19 years old. In the case of Africans such a child was likely to be out of wedlock and prior to “marriage” There was also the matter of age at first marriage. Koster suggested 17-18 for men and 14-15 for girls. Could it have been that potential creole partners for an African were already “spoken for”? (57). There were also cultural factors. Cultural traditions carried over from Africa--- prolonged periods of lactation, sexual abstinence for a proscribed period after childbirth, taboos preventing marriage or sexual intercourse with certain kin and other factors—could result longer intervals between successive births and thus a lower birth rate among African women than their creole contemporaries (58).

But there was one powerful circumstance which did argue for the selection of a partner in marriage who was from the same cultural area. This was communication. We owe to Dom Pedro de Almeida, governor (1717-21) of the captaincy of São Paulo and Minas Gerais, three acutely perceptive observations: first, that there was a greater incidence among slaves arriving in the mining areas than elsewhere of slaves who had already reached adulthood; secondly, that they were drawn from a variety of language
groups, which challenged easy linguistic interaction; and, thirdly, that as adults they did not have the same facility as would children to learn a new language. Minas Gerais was demographically atypical in many regards in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, but the general inference holds true. Namely, that Africans sought out as sexual partners and their partners in marriage fellow Africans with whom they shared at least one language in common and that there are examples of couples in which each partner was a slave and of African birth and who had stable relationships (59).

This makes all the more important and tantalizing records for four parishes in Rio de Janeiro from the mid-eighteenth century through to the end of the colonial period (60). Of 78 married slave couples whose children were baptised in the parish of São José between 1751 and 1758, in 64 cases each partner was African. In 55 of these marriages, each partner was from the same cultural area in Africa. In the 14 marriages in which one partner was a non-African (crioulo, pardo, cabra), in 9 cases the Brazilian-born partner was male. A sample of 129 marriages between slaves registered in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Candelaria between 1751 and 1761 shows that in 93 instances groom and bride were African. In 73 of these 93 marriages, each partner came from the same cultural area of Africa. Of the 36 marriages in which an African did not marry an African, in one case the partner was white and in all other cases partners were Afro-Brazilians (crioulo or pardo). Lest this be regarded as an urban anomaly, a sample (1763-1770) of 22 slave marriages in the rural parish of São Salvador do Mundo de Guaratiba, showed that in 19 instances bride and groom were Africans and from the same cultural area. Only in three marriages was a partner Brazilian-born. These limited data would appear to support the hypothesis that African slaves tended to take as partners in marriage other Africans of like legal status and from the same cultural area of Africa. A sample of 545 marriages in the parish of Engenho Velho between 1764 and 1828 led Mary Karasch to highlight the “high degree of assimilation and conversion attained by some African slaves” as evidenced by the number of Africans who had gained their freedom and subsequently married. These freed Africans tended to select as partners in marriage African women who had also gained their freedom (forras) and who were of the same cultural area or nação as the groom. In short, these limited data suggest that not only did Africans prefer to be endogamous in their choice of a marriage partner, seeking out a
fellow African rather than an Afro-Brazilian but, wherever possible, they selected as a partner an individual from their own cultural area on Africa and with similar linguistic skills. While I have suggested that one or the other partner was the agent in taking this decision, this does not exclude from consideration the strength of community pressure. The makeup of brotherhoods in colonial Brazil shows how strong was the sense of community and identity between persons of different African groupings (Angolan, Costa da Mina, nagô, jeje). These various groups could have exerted pressure on one of their number to select as a partner in marriage a person of the same ethnic or linguistic group (61). The data also suggest that, whereas to be creole and either born free or *liberto* might be seen as a combination likely to increase the pool of potential sexual or marriageable partners, this pool did not include Africans.

That language compatibility between prospective partners was a major concern in the selection process does not lessen the cultural dimension which has been succinctly stated by Sweet in addressing the matter of intent: “…the evidence from the parish records suggests that “marriage” was just one more way of crystallizing African ethnic and national alliances, perpetuating shared understandings of kinship, child rearing, and so on” (62). Quite so. The decision by an African to marry an African was taken consciously. It was an affirmation by each party of his and her adherence to African core principles. Since procreation was central to such core values and principles, this decision also reflected the shared intent to bring up any offspring, albeit creole by circumstance of place of birth, in accordance with African rather than American values and principles. Not only Africans felt an urge to preserve African rituals. In a slave community in Bahia Brazilian-born mulato women assumed leadership roles in the celebration of *calundús* as a manifestation of Central African beliefs, religious rituals, spirit possession, with African musical instruments, and in an African language (63). Was African community or parental pressure such that children who were first generation creoles by birth but Africans by nurturing and culture themselves selected as their partners in marriage persons also of African birth? If so, did the same pressures lead subsequent generations to show a sustained preference for persons of African birth rather than creoles as partners?

In his *Compendio Narrativo do Peregrino da America* (1728), the Portuguese Nuno Marques Pereira referred to the *quijila* as being passed from generation to generation:
“Quizila is an explicit pact which these peoples make with the devil. The human partner derives some physical benefit from this agreement, such as good fortune in war, in hunting, in farming, etc…... This quizila, or pact, by tradition passes to the sons and daughters, to the grandsons and granddaughters, and their descendants. However, since they were not parties to the original pact, for them it is implicit rather than explicit”.

Here, Pereira was referring to Africans from Angola and the Costa da Mina transported to Brazil and their descendants and illustrates the inter-generational nature of such beliefs or superstitions, although as a good Catholic Pereira took pains to note that baptism and confession could free descendants from any such pact. Was this community pressure effective only on the first generation of creole offspring, or also on further generations when self identity as a creole and Brazilian-born may have come to predominate over considerations of ethnicity derived from African antecedents? My question remains unanswered although, tantalizingly, Karasch comments that African freedmen in Brazil, in default of an African freedwoman, would choose as a partner “blacks or children of African parents” (64). This brings the discussion full cycle and highlights the dilemma of the historian. Whereas the historical record contains fragments of evidence supportive of a thesis as to the existence of African behaviours, practices, and rituals in a creole society, documentary sources are woefully lacking when it comes to values, core beliefs, and guiding principles.

Conclusion

In the historiography on peoples of the African diasporas in the Americas the heterogeneity of such diasporas is often discussed in terms of tribal, ethnic, linguistic and cultural differences. In this essay, I have advocated that to these and other differences must be added the critically important circumstance of continent of birth. To be born in Africa or in Brazil exposed an individual to a totally different context. In the African case to the fore was a strong religious component which itself evidenced a diversity of religions each of which had its own belief systems, rituals, and ceremonies. Polytheism and monotheism co-existed. Complex and varied forms of kinship were equally omnipresent. There were unwritten but prescribed expectations as to behaviour and to the role of the individual in a community. There were organizing principles, value systems,
and priorities which guided individuals and communities. The American context in which Africans found themselves in Brazil was itself a construct imposed on autochthonous peoples without respect for native sovereignty, native cultures, organization of labour, social hierarchies and, above all for vast territories to which native peoples did not claim ownership or possession but saw themselves as stewards of the land. The Portuguese were not attuned to cultures and peoples which had no (to the Portuguese) recognizable places of worship, individual leaders, social hierarchies or distinctions of class. Other than in the sixteenth century in coastal areas, and later in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Africans rarely came into contact with Native Americans with the notable exception of Maranhão and Pará. The context into which Africans were thrust was hybrid but most would have been unaware of this because the world in which they moved, worked, lived, and died was one which another group of intruders—the Portuguese—had come to dominate. There were Afro-Brazilians who, for their own physical wellbeing and even survival had to accommodate themselves to beliefs, practices, and rituals, to the Portuguese language, to European forms of family structures, and to expectations of behaviour which were European rather than American. Whatever beliefs and values Afro-Brazilians may have held, whatever their feelings of joy and sadness, whatever aspirations they entertained, if these deviated too much from the gamut of expectations held by the Portuguese, or if they were expressed or voiced in a manner or language alien to Portuguese eyes or ears, such beliefs, values, emotions, hopes and fears had to be held secretly or expressed clandestinely or not at all. Peculiar to Brazil was a form of slavery unknown in Africa and which was accompanied by a starkly legal distinction between slaves and non-slaves. While in Africa peoples did have a range of complexions ranging from the very dark to very light, in Brazil skin colour could stigmatize even free or freed individuals as descendants of slaves. Regardless of the degree to which some Africans became acculturated, or creoles could create an Afro-Luso-Brazilian culture or even a Afro-Brazilian culture, there were to persist stark differences between the Old World and the New World for Africans.

For Africans, the volume of a slave trade which was as constant in its massive volume as it was enduring and whose numbers so clearly outnumbered any Portuguese emigration to Brazil meant that persons of African birth or descent were in a majority in
many regions of the colony throughout the colonial period. Of these an elevated proportion was always made up of Africans “fresh off the boat”. Series of waves of displaced humanity ensured the constant presence in Brazil of a population for whom Africa was their birthplace and not merely a memory. It also ensured that this population remained as “the other” for some Afro-Brazilians and that this sentiment would be reciprocated. Self-evidently, Africans had their beliefs, values, rituals and taboos, languages and practices which were African and many of which set Africans apart from Afro-Brazilians. Portuguese institutions, Catholicism, language, laws and decrees, social organization and, above all, the institution of slavery, its implementation and its many ramifications which left no person in colonial Brazil untouched, served further to create distance between Africans and Afro-Brazilians. All Africans in Brazil had been moved in spatial terms but in other regards some remained Africans. For many Afro-Brazilians, especially if they were slaves, mobility rather than residence in any single location characterized their lives but in cultural terms they did not change. In Brazil, oftentimes the physical and cultural space Africans and Afro-Brazilians occupied was not of their own choosing. Sometimes, they created a shared physical and cultural space. Sometimes, each created its own space (65). The circumstance of place of birth served both to unite and to divide persons of African descent in the New World as it had in the Old World.

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NOTES
I wish to acknowledge my debt and my thanks to Professors Philip Morgan and Ronald Walters for sharing with me their knowledge of Atlantic and American history, and to Professors Sara Berry, Philip Curtin and Igor Kopytoff who directed me to readings in African history.


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5. For examples of slave owners of slaves, see Kathleen J. Higgins, “Licentious Liberty” in a Brazilian Gold-Mining Region. Slavery, Gender, and Social Control in Eighteenth-Century Sabará, Minas Gerais(University Park: Pennslyvania State University Press, 1999), pp. 40-41; Karasch, Slave Life, pp. 343-44.


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10 “o parecer tinha praticamente o mesmo peso que o ser na sociedade colonial” in Eliana M. R. Goldschmidt, *Convivendo com o pecado na sociedade colonial paulista, 1719-1822* (São Paulo: Annablume, 1998), p. 10. I am indebted to my colleague Bill Rowe for his insights into the interplay between genealogy and phenotype.


12 The term *emboaba* was used by *paulistas* to refer to anyone not a *paulista*. This included persons from Portugal and the Atlantic islands. Taunay was inconclusive on the etymology. A recent ascription is to the Tupi *mbo’aba* signifying “aggressor”. Citing the Codex Costa Matoso(1749-52), Boxer wrote(*Golden Age*, p.62, n.2):“my own preference is for the eighteenth century sources which define *emboaba* as meaning a bird with feathered legs, whence the term was applied in derision to the newcomers from Europe and the coast who wore protective covering for their legs and feet”.See “emboaba” in *Dicionário Houaiss da língua portuguesa* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Objetiva, 2004).

13 On *africano* see Mieko Nishida, *Slavery and Identity. Ethnicity, Gender and Race in Salvador, Brazil, 1808-1888* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press),
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17 Koster, Travels in Brazil, vol. 2, p. 276; Karasch, Slave Life, pp.131-32, 146-84; Dauril Alden and Joseph C. Miller, “Out of Africa: The Slave Trade and the
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23 Antonil, *Cultura e opulência do Brasil*, part 1, book 1, chap.5.
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30 Koster noted “and this term is much regarded among them”, *Travels*, vol 2, p. 251.

31 This line of argument is suggested by Monica Schuler: “From the beginning the immigrants, regardless of ethnic origin, decided to become part of a large, all-African or all-immigrant group separate from the Jamaican macrocosm which included Afro-Jamaicans as well as Europeans”. In “Alas, Alas, Kongo”: *A Social History of Indentured African Immigration into Jamaica, 1841-1865* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), p.65.


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35 Conversation with Jacob Olupona, 9 March 2005.


37 “Suposto fosse de gentio da Guiné, contudo, depois que teve a felicidade de ser conduzida à terra de Cristandade e receber o Santo batismo, e por ele ficar filha da Santa Madre Igreja, se tem portado como católica, fazendo muito por em tudo mostrar que o é, cumprindo com o preceito de ouvir missa, e como os mais não faltando à fé da religião”.  
Apud Magalhães de Aguiar, Negras Minas Gerais, pp. 147-9.

38 For saints venerated by Africans and Afro-Brazilians, see Patricia Mulvey, “Black Brothers and Sisters: Membership in the Black Lay Brotherhoods of Colonial Brazil”, Luso-Brazilian Review, 17:2 (Winter 1980):253-79; Fritz Teixeira de Salles, Associações religiosas no ciclo do ouro (Belo Horizonte: Universidade de Minas Gerais, 1963), end tables; Karasch, Slave Life, pp. 84, 269-70, 280-84. Karasch (p.272) makes the point that “many nineteenth-century saints had attributes compatible with Central African values”, and extends this to include images of the dead Christ, of the Holy Spirit and even the devil; see also Willy de Craemer, Jan Vansina, and Renée C. Fox, “Religious Movements


This is based on Karasch’s succinct description (Slave Life, pp.316-20) of suicides in Rio de Janeiro in the nineteenth century, but is equally relevant to other regions at an earlier period. Two centuries earlier, Antonil had referred to slaves fleeing from punishment. He continues: “….ou se mataráo per si, como costumam, tomando a respiração, ou enforcando-se, ou procurarão tirar a vida aos que lha dão tão má,
recorrendo (se for necessario) a artes diabólicas,” *Cultura e Opulência*, part 1, bk. 1, chap. 9.


50 Sweet makes the excellent point that new data on the slave trade “demonstrate that Africans were not always arriving in the Americas in heterogeneous ‘crowds’. Rather, many were arriving in coherent cultural groupings that shared much in common”. He describes the process of becoming “African” as an “American phenomenon” (creolization) and a “collective ‘African’ identity replacing ethnic identities. *Recreating Africa*, pp. 115-117 and n. 40. The potential existed, notwithstanding one partner being African-born, for slaves to create an extended family, see Manolo Florentino and José Roberto Góes, *A paz das senzalas. Famílias escravas e tráfico atlântico, Rio de Janeiro, c. 1790-c. 1850* (Rio de Janeiro: Civilização brasileira, 1997), pp. 81-102 and note 24.


53 “core beliefs” (pp. 2, 103, 117) “shared core cultural beliefs” (p. 7), “African religious principles” (p. 101), “certain core beliefs and practices” (p. 103), in Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, especially chapters 4-8; Russell-Wood, “The African background”, “many shared common cultures and values” (p. 115), “shared cultural birthright” (p. 122); “suggest that scholars of African diasporas in the Americas would be well served by examining some aspects of the Afro-American (in its broadest sense) experience—leadership, plurality and diversity of power, production and commerce, kinship and domestic arrangements, religious beliefs and practices, and identity—in the context of Africa” (p. 120).
Russell-Wood, “The African background”, pp. 111-15; Karasch, Slave Life, p.268. Koster observed: “respect which is paid to old age is extremely pleasing to witness. Superannuated Africans, upon the estates, are never suffered to want any comforts with which it is in the power of their fellow-slaves to supply them”, Travels. Vol.2.


Florentino and Góes, A paz das senzalas, pp.135-38; Sweet, Recreating Africa, pp.65.

APMSG, vol. 4, fol. 234v; Sweet, Recreating Africa, pp. 36-7.

Sweet, Recreating Africa, pp. 44-48; Karasch, Slave Life, tables 9.4 and 9.5, pp. 291-94. Data from parishes in the Bahian Recôncavo confirm findings that West Africans were more likely to marry endogamously than Central Africans, that Africans married Africans, that often marriages were between Africans from the same cultural area, and that Afro-Brazilians preferred to marry Afro-Brazilians, Schwartz, Sugar Plantations, pp.
391-2; see also Florentino and Góes, *A paz das senzalas*, pp.147-59. While my discussion focuses on marriages in which each partner is a slave, there is evidence from the nineteenth century that endogamy also prevailed among *libertos*: see Maria Inês Côrtes de Oliveira, *O liberto: o seu mundo e os outros, Salvador, 1790-1890* (São Paulo: Corrupio, 1988).


62 Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, p.44

63 Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, pp. 218-9;


65 As of the 1830s there is evidence that there existed in Rio a community of African Minas from Bahia. For this and discussion of distinct communities of creoles or of Africans and crioles, see Karasch, *Slave Life*, p. 5.
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